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**INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN MALAYSIA : MAINSTREAM
PRIMARY TEACHERS' ATTITUDES TO CHANGE OF
POLICY AND PRACTICES**

ABDUL AZIZ BIN JANTAN

PhD

2007

**INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN MALAYSIA : MAINSTREAM
PRIMARY TEACHERS' ATTITUDES TO CHANCE OF
POLICY AND PRACTICES**

ABDUL AZIZ BIN JANTAN

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirement of the
University of Northumbria at Newcastle
for the degree of
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Education Studies University of Northumbria at Newcastle

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ABSTRACT

The Malaysian Ministry of Education is planning to implement inclusive education in mainstream primary schools by the year 2010. This ambitious project may lead to significant change but may also encounter a variety of barriers including provision of resources, established forms of teacher training and established teacher attitudes. Malaysian primary school teachers may find themselves in the unfortunate position of having to implement an innovation for which they are unprepared, both in terms of emotional acceptance and technical skills. This study has been undertaken in response to a directive received from the Ministry of Education with the express aim of providing the Ministry with relevant material concerning an examination of the attitudes (understanding/beliefs, feelings/values and behaviours) of primary school teachers in relation to the present and planned educational provision in Malaysia regarding inclusive education. It also takes account of these teachers' perspectives of their own needs and of resource requirements to support this move towards inclusive practice.

The study population consisted of a sample of primary school teachers in Melaka, one of the states of federal Malaysia, which I view as representative of the nation's teachers. In the study attitudes were investigated in terms of a three-components model of attitude formation to identify cognitive, affective, and conative aspects. For this purpose two data collecting approaches were used i.e. quantitative (by questionnaire method) and qualitative (by interview), in order to define the nature of teacher attitudes towards inclusive education. To this end two Malay-language instruments were developed for the study, namely a standard questionnaire technique and a semi-structured interview schedule used in individual, face-to-face interviewing.

The findings of the study indicate that Malaysian primary teachers at present have a concept of inclusive education as merely placing all children identified by the Ministry of Education with learning difficulties into mainstream classes, either part-time or full-time. The teachers were of the view that the structure of primary schools will need to change in order to support the Ministry's plan, or else the plan itself should be modified. Methods are discussed as to how Malaysia's present primary educational provision might begin to move towards an effective policy and practice of inclusive education.

TABLE OF CONTENT

INTRODUCTION.....	1
Chapter 1 : Malaysia and its Educational Background	7
1.1 Country Profile	7
1.2 Malaysia's general educational background.....	8
1.3 The general school structure and system	11
1.3.1 Kindergartens	12
1.3.2 Primary schooling	12
1.3.3 Primary school curriculum	15
1.3.4 Secondary schooling	16
1.4 Special Education in Malaysia.....	19
1.4.1 Ministry of National Unity and Social Development: the special education programme	22
1.4.2 Screening of children with impairment	24
1.4.3 The Ministry of Education's special education programme	26
1.5 Special Education In Malaysia: its policy, philosophy, aims and objectives	29
1.6 Review of the Malaysian special education programme	32
1.7 Special education teachers.....	33
1.8 Summary.....	35
Chapter 2 : Inclusive Education	38
2.1 International Perspective	38
2.1.1 Children with SEN and the terminology relating to 'special needs'	39
2.1.2 Inclusive Education (IE).....	41
2.1.3 Rationales of IE.....	45
2.1.4 Changes to support Inclusion	47
2.2 Inclusive Education - Malaysian perspective	52
2.2.1 Educational placement of children with SEN	53
2.2.2 Malaysian rationale for introducing IE into mainstream schooling	56
2.2.3 Educational constraint in Malaysian primary schools affecting the introduction of IE.....	57
2.2.4 Summary	62
Chapter 3 : Attitudes.....	67
3.1 Definition of attitudes	67
3.2 Attitude Development.....	71
3.3 Model of attitudes	72
3.3.1 Single component model of attitude.....	72
3.3.2 The three-component model.....	72

3.3.3.	Empirical support for the two models of attitude.....	75
3.4	Measurement of attitude.....	76
3.4.1.	Measurements of attitudes by direct questioning.....	76
3.4.2	Attitude scales	77
3.5	Justifying the selection of the three-components model of attitudes for the study.	77
3.6	Implications of the three-component model of attitudes on inclusion	78
3.7	Conclusion	79
Chapter 4 : Teacher Attitudes towards the Inclusion of children with SEN in mainstream classes.....		81
4.1	Teacher attitudes towards inclusion.....	81
4.1.1	Non-Malaysian research.....	84
4.2	Variables influencing teacher attitudes to inclusion	86
4.2.1	Child-related variables	86
4.2.2	Teacher related variables.....	89
4.2.3	Educational-environment related variables	96
4.3	Conclusion and caveat	98
CHAPTER 5: The study: specific research questions		100
5.1	Statement of the problem.....	101
CHAPTER 6 : Research Methodology		104
6.1	Quantitative and Qualitative research.....	105
6.1.1	Questionnaire and Interviews.....	107
6.1.2	The relationship between qualitative and quantitative method in this study .	109
6.1.3	The nature of the case study (interview)	109
6.1.4	Connection between quantitative (survey) and qualitative (semi-structured) approaches.....	110
6.1.5	Population of the study.....	112
6.2.	Quantitative method : Questionnaire survey	112
6.2.1	Sampling.....	112
6.2.2	Instrument.....	114
6.2.3	Determination of PSTA questionnaire items content.....	115
6.2.4	Pilot Study	122
6.2.5	Data collection procedure.....	124
6.2.6	Data analysis	128
6.2.7	Analysis of open-ended items	133
6.3	Qualitative approach: Interviews.....	135
6.3.1	Sampling.....	135
6.3.2	Instrument.....	136
6.3.2	Data collection process.....	138
CHAPTER 7 : Questionnaire Findings		142
7.1	General attitudes of RMCTs towards the proposal to introduce IE into Malaysian mainstream primary schools.	144

7.2	Influence of RMCTs' background characteristics (independent variables) on general attitudes to IE	144
7.3	Primary teachers' cognitive component of attitudes to IE	147
7.3.1	General cognitive component.....	147
7.3.2	Perceived knowledge of IE (K1) and perceived ability to teach children with SEN (K2).....	148
7.3.3	Response to an item in section A of PSTA attitudinal scale	153
7.4	Primary teachers' affective component of attitudes	154
7.4.1	General affective component	154
7.4.2	Perceived benefit of IE to children with SEN (FI), and perceived suitability of the National Primary Schools' Curriculum (KBSR) for children with SEN ..	155
7.4.3	Response to items in section B of PSTA attitudinal scale	158
7.5	Primary teachers' conative component of attitudes to IE.	165
7.5.1	General conative component.....	165
7.5.2	Item 32: Willingness to support the implementation of IE	165
7.5.3	Item 35: Willingness to improve relevant teaching skills	166
7.5.4	Influence of RMCTs' background characteristics (independent variables) of (1) contact with children with SEN at the professional level, (2) types of children with SEN in contact with at the professional level, and (3) schools with SECs tried placement on item 32 and item 35	168
7.5.5	Conditions for accepting children with SEN in mainstream classes.....	170
7.6	Influence of RMCTs' background characteristics (independent variables) on the three components of attitudes (dependent variables) to IE	174
7.7	Relationship between sections (A,B,C), sub-scales, and items of the attitudinal scales of PSTA questionnaire for RMCTs.....	180
7.7.1	Relationship between perceived knowledge of IE (K1) and perceived ability to teach children with SEN (K2)	180
7.7.2	Relationship between RMCTs' three components of attitudes towards IE ..	181
7.7.3	Relationship between RMCTs' perceived ability to teach children with SEN (K2) to the affective component of attitudes to IE (section B) and willingness to support the implementation of IE (item 32).....	181
7.8	Perceived suitability of children with SEN for placement in mainstream classes	183
7.8.1	Primary teachers' perception of the suitability of the three types of children with SEN for IE	183
7.8.2	RMCTs' perception of the suitability of different types of children with SEN for IE	184
7.8.3	SETs' perception of the suitability of different types of children with SEN for IE	185
7.8.4	Perceived suitability of different types of children with SEN for IE by RMCTs in school with SECs	186
7.9	Open ended Items	187
7.9.1	Item 40.....	187
7.9.2	Item 41.....	194
7.10	Conclusion	198

CHAPTER 8 : Interview findings	200
8.1 The education of children with SEN in Melaka primary schools.....	204
8.2 Cognitive Component of attitudes to IE	204
8.2.1 Primary teachers' concepts of children with SEN	204
8.2.2 RMCTs' perceived knowledge of the Education Ministry's special education programme	205
8.2.3 RMCTs' perceived knowledge of their school's children with SEN.....	207
8.2.4 Primary teachers' understanding of IE in Malaysia	209
8.2.5 Knowledge of the Education Ministry's intention to place children with SEN in mainstream classes	210
8.2.5 RMCT perceived rationale of the Ministry's plan	212
8.2.6 Perceived abilities of RMCTs to teach children with SEN a. School with SECs (LD) that had tried placement	213
8.3 Affective component of attitudes.....	217
8.3.1 Perceived right of children with SEN to IE.....	217
8.3.2 Perceived benefit of IE to children with SEN	220
8.3.3 Perceived suitability of the National New Primary Schools' Curriculum (KBSR) for the education of children with SEN.....	230
8.3.4 Perceived effect of IE on teachers' workload	233
8.3.5 Perceived effect of IE on mainstream children	234
8.3.6 Perceived effect of IE on schools' performance in National Primary Schools' Test (UPSR) examination.....	240
8.3.7 Suggestions about alternative methods of evaluating mainstream schools' yearly performance if they practise IE	243
8.3.8 Types of children with SEN favoured by primary teachers for IE.....	244
8.4 Conative component of attitude.....	247
8.4.1 Perceived RMCTs support for IE implementation (See Table 75 for teacher responses)	247
8.4.2 Perceived willingness of RMCTs to attend in-service training in special education	250
8.4.3 Primary teacher perceptions of the conditions and strategies for encouraging RMCTs to accept IE	253
8.5 General issues	258
8.5.1 Barriers towards the implementation of IE in mainstream schools	258
8.5.2 Changes suggested by primary teachers prior to IE implementation in mainstream schools	261
8.6 Conclusion	264
CHAPTER 9 : Discussion	266
9.1 Primary teachers' understanding of IE	267
9.2 Primary teachers' perceived rationale of IE innovation	271
9.3 RMCTs' attitudes to IE.....	273
9.4 Variables influencing RMCTs' general attitudes to IE	281

CHAPTER 10 : Recommendations.....	283
10.1 Changes to support IE in mainstream primary schools	283
10.2 Implication for change.....	291
10.3 Dissemination	292
CHAPTER 11 : Limitations of the study, Conclusion, and Further Studies	293
11.1 Limitations of the study	293
11.2 Final Conclusions	295
11.3 Future studies.....	298
Appendices	300
Appendix 1	301
Appendix 2	303
Appendix 3	309
Appendix 5	312
School Health, Community and Education, Studies	312
Appendix 6	313
Appendix 7	320
Appendix 8	321
The Interview Schedule: English Version.....	321
Appendix 9	327
Appendix 10	333
Codes used in analysing open-ended item 40 of the PSTA questionnaire	333
Appendix 11	335
Codes used in analysing open-ended item 41 of the PSTA questionnaire	335
Appendix 12	337
Codes used to analyse interviews.....	337
Appendix 13	348
Translated quotations of the interviews	348
Reference	395
Malaysia	395
International	398

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Above all I am indebted to the Ministry of Education of Malaysia who gave me the opportunity to equip myself with the necessary research background and knowledge that is aimed at improving the social and educational future of Malaysia's schoolchildren.

Declaration

I declare that the work contained in this thesis has not been submitted for any other award and that it is all my own work.

Name: **Abdul Aziz bin Jantan**

Signature:

Date: 8/12/2007

INTRODUCTION

‘Inclusion’ in education is an international concept and goal. The United Nations’ Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), the Standard Rule on the Equalisation of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities (1993), and the Salamanca Statement (1994) have directed the attention of nation states to the development of inclusive educational systems for children with disabilities. Where previously marginalised and disadvantaged children who experience disability were excluded from mainstream education, the recent past has seen a major explosion of inclusive practice internationally. These changes have been rapid and have generated a debate regarding the correct nature of inclusive practice and what changes to the educational system are necessary to accommodate a greater range of children in mainstream schools. Malaysia, as a developing nation, has adopted educational policies which will ultimately, it is hoped, result in a ‘caring society’. The process of advancing the educational opportunities of children with disabilities is both new and challenging to existing educational practices, and if it is to impact upon special educational provision in Malaysia, it is essential that various studies be undertaken to facilitate its successful implementation. At this point it may be necessary to comment that the notion of inclusive education as conceived by the Malaysian Ministry of Education may correspond closely to that notion as debated in the international academic world, or it may not. This may not become clear until the Ministry produces its precise guidelines, which are at present awaited. However this dissertation seeks to contribute to the process of clarification by trying to answer the following key questions about the concept of inclusive education as currently held in Malaysia:

1. What is the understanding of Malaysian regular mainstream class teachers (RMCTs) regarding inclusive education?
2. What knowledge do RMCTs have about the Ministry of Education’s plans for inclusive education?
3. What are the general attitudes of RMCTs towards the intended implementation of inclusive education?

4. How do the teaching backgrounds of RMCTs influence their general attitudes towards inclusive education?
5. How do the perceptions of RMCTs regarding their ability to teach children with special educational needs relate to their willingness to support the implementation of inclusive education?
6. What extra resources and supports do RMCTs consider they would need in the event of the implementation of inclusive education?

Prior to 1981, the Malaysian government provided little schooling for children with special educational needs (SEN); such schooling as existed was provided by voluntary organisations. Children with moderate intellectual impairment could attend mainstream schooling, if their parents wished it. Those children with intellectual impairment who did attend mainstream schools were given remedial support partly by chance, i.e. if it happened to be available in the school, and it consisted of seeking to improve their literacy and numeracy skills only. The majority of these children usually achieved low standards of academic attainment compared to their more able contemporaries. But they often dropped out of formal schooling.

In 1981, the government accepted full responsibility for the education of children with disabilities, but continued to work with the voluntary organisations. Responsibility was divided between the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Social Welfare, renamed in 1990 the Ministry of National Unity Development. The Ministry of Education's special education programme has continued to expand. The Ministry officially recognised that children with moderate intellectual impairments require special needs support. And in 1994, the Ministry accepted responsibility for organizing the education of children with autistic tendencies.

Also in 1981, the Ministry adopted their so called 'least restrictive environment' policy in providing educational facilities for its children with SEN. This meant that instead of providing any new purpose-built schools, it established self-contained special education classes (SEC) in mainstream schools for children with SEN. This was done to encourage social integration

between these children and their mainstream peers, but in recent years the view is generally held that this development was somewhat forced upon the teaching community with the result that its implementation has not been received with enthusiasm, although there are a number of individual classes where children are considered to have integrated relatively well.

With the Prime Minister's '2020 Vision' policy, the Ministry has given much publicity to its special education programmes as part of its new 'caring' policy. Special education in Malaysia is currently undergoing change as it prepares for the introduction of IE, in line with developments in other countries (Ferguson 2006). IE is understood in Malaysia as the placing of children with SEN in the Ministry's special education programmes in mainstream classes so they can be educated alongside their more able peers. To ensure the effectiveness of these programmes, the Ministry was massively reorganised in October 1995, and a new department was created to deal specifically with the education of children with SEN. This new department, (the Special Education Department) targeted the year 2010 as the launching date for the widespread introduction of IE in Malaysian mainstream primary schools.

IE is a totally new education strategy in Malaysia. Its implementation will require, for the first time, that all Malaysian mainstream primary teachers become aware of and involved in the educational methods and practice of a relatively small number of established specialist teachers. Therefore IE is a radical educational innovation in Malaysia, and not without its tensions, as I have discovered through this research.

The teachers who will be most affected by IE implementation are the mainstream primary teachers. IE will require them to adopt alternative teaching approaches in order to meet the educational needs of both children with SEN and mainstream children, as both of these categories will be taught in the same classes. The majority of Malaysian mainstream teachers have not been trained to teach children with SEN. The Malaysian teacher training curriculum did not have any component of special education or IE prior to 1995. Thus IE implementation could create tensions and dilemmas among the mainstream profession.

The scope of this dissertation focuses upon primary school teachers in the state of Melaka, South Malaysia, and its findings relate only to their expressed attitudes. But it is defensible to generalise from their opinions to those of Malaysian primary teachers in general. There are two justifications for making this claim: (1) primary teachers in Malaysia are trained solely by the Ministry of Education, therefore they all of them gain a fundamentally identical pre-service training, and (2) education in Malaysia is centrally controlled, and all primary schools have similar administrative structures, systems, and practices.

Professionally I have a strong commitment to special education. As a college of education lecturer in Malaysia I was involved in the in-service training (INSET) of primary school teachers for children who have difficulties in acquiring the basic skills of reading and arithmetic. An important aspect of the course was the development or encouragement of empathy in course participants towards those children perceived as being slow learners. It was hoped that at the end of INSET, course participants would be able to extend to these children the understanding and the help they desperately need, so as to make attending schools educationally meaningful and rewarding. Academically it was also hoped that these teachers would be able to practise the teaching skills acquired during the courses to help these children master the basic skills of literacy and numeracy before entering secondary schooling.

I considered that embarking on this study would enable me to gain in-depth understanding of primary teachers' perceptions regarding IE. This hopefully will make my involvement in the training of in-service remedial education teachers (RET - Malaysian Perspective) and special education teachers (SET) more effective in the future.

In the interests of facilitating IE, a variety of practical changes to the present educational methods of the Malaysian mainstream primary school system may need to be undertaken. This is because the educational climate currently prevailing in the mainstream primary sector may not be conducive to the successful implementation of IE. It is hoped that the findings of this study will prove significant not only for the state of Melaka, but for the country of Malaysia as a whole. The findings will hopefully be useful to the following categories of people:

1. Bahagian Pendidikan Khas (BPK) (Special Education Department of Malaysia) generally, and Jabatan Pendidikan Negeri (JPN) (State Education Department) and their education officers in exercising their responsibilities for preparing the ground for the successful introduction of IE into Malaysian mainstream primary schools in the year 2010
2. Academics in higher education institutions in their dissemination of educational theory of IE and the initiation of educational change in practice.
3. All teachers entrusted with the education of children with SEN in the development of their attitudes and commitment to the teaching of these children in their schools generally, and in their classes specifically.
4. Teachers in general, parents of children with SEN and mainstream children in trying to gain a better understanding of the various issues involved in the education of children with SEN generally, and IE specifically.
5. College trainers of teachers in their efforts to nurture, foster or otherwise encourage empathy towards children with SEN among pre-service and qualified teachers.
6. The general public in reacting to widespread discussion in the media on the merits and demerits of educating children with SEN in mainstream classes, and the effects it will have on the education both of these children and mainstream children.

This dissertation consists of eleven chapters. The chapters are arranged in such a way as to inform the reader, first, of the background and educational philosophy which underpin this field of investigation. This is then followed by the actual study method and the significance of its findings both for the general Malaysian context and internationally.

The first chapter offers a brief description of the Malaysian educational background and how the present policy to introduce IE in Malaysia was evolved. It also describes the present Malaysian educational system, its structure and practices at both primary and secondary levels.

The second chapter is concerned with internationally accepted theories of 'inclusion' and 'integration'. It provides the reader with a rationale for inclusive practice and it describes the changes that may be necessary to support inclusion in mainstream schools. It also gives information on the practice of educating children with SEN in Malaysia, and it discusses what existing factors in Malaysian primary school organization could hinder IE implementation. The third chapter is about theories of attitudes, especially the three-components model of attitude formation as employed in this study. The fourth chapter concerns non-Malaysian studies on teachers' attitudes toward inclusion and the factors that influence these attitudes.

Chapter five informs the reader about the study's specific research questions, and Chapter six presents the research methodology developed for this investigation. Chapter seven provides careful description of the questionnaire findings, and informs the reader in detail of the revealed attitudes of primary teachers to IE policy. Chapter eight describes the interview data and informs the reader about why primary teachers exhibit certain attitudes to IE. Chapter nine discusses and reflects on the findings of the study in general, and Chapter ten lists recommendations to the Ministry of Education on the changes that need to be undertaken prior to IE implementation if the innovation is to be given the chance to succeed. Chapter eleven finally offers an acknowledgement of the study's limitations, and restates its conclusions, with further recommendations for future studies in the field of special education in Malaysia and perhaps in other countries too.

This chapter provides a general background to the major issue which my dissertation addresses. To understand the challenges, the barriers to, and the potentials of the Malaysia Government's declared initiative to pursue a policy of inclusive education (IE) for children with special needs in the mainstream school system, a brief explanation of how current practices have emerged is offered here. This will include a sketch of the development both of mainstream and special educational provision in the country. This is offered in order to trace the development of special educational provision in Malaysia to date and the discussion will cover both relevant legislation and the practice of teachers working with children with special educational needs. This will include aspects of my own background and practical teaching experience.

1.1 Country Profile

Malaysia is located in South East Asia, situated 1° to 7° North Latitude and 100 ° to 120° East Longitude. It consists of two distinct areas: Peninsula Malaysia, and Sarawak and Sabah on the large island of Borneo. These two areas are separated by the South China Sea. In all, Malaysia consists of 13 states and 2 federal territories. It covers an area of 329 758 square kilometers.

Historically, Malaysia was colonized by the British from 1824 until its independence in 1957, except for the brief period of Japanese control (1941-1945) during the Second World War. It was during the period of British colonization that Chinese, Indians and others migrated to Malaysia (then called Malaya and Borneo) to work mainly in the mining and rubber industries.

Today the population of Malaysia is estimated at 23 million. The three main ethnic groups are Bumiputras (Malays in Peninsula Malaysia and the indigenous people of Sarawak and Sabah), Chinese and Indians. Malaysia is very much a multi-ethnic and multi-racial country.

Traditionally, the main source of revenue was from agriculture, mining and quarrying. Today the contribution of these towards the country's wealth remains immense. Realising that over-reliance on primary products would place the Malaysian economy at the mercy of fluctuations in world prices and demands, the government in the early 1960s embarked upon a plan to industrialise the country. This was to ensure that manufacturing would be the main source of income for the country in the future. By 1992, manufacturing contributed roughly 30 % towards the country's GNP (EPRD, 2003). By 2002, the manufacturing industries helped to make Malaysia one of the world's recognised developing nations.

In 1990, Malaysia entered a new phase in its industrial development: it moved towards the creation of capital-intensive and technologically sophisticated industries. Malaysia's main aim is to attain the status of a fully developed industrialized nation by the year 2020. In his speech, 'Malaysia: The Way Forward' (1991), the Prime Minister stated that besides striving to be a fully developed nation (Abu Bakar, 2001b:246)

"... Malaysia should not be developed only in the economic sense. It must be a nation that is fully developed along the dimensions: economically, politically, socially, spiritually, psychologically and culturally, By the 2020, Malaysia can be a united nation, with a confident Malaysia society that is democratic, liberal and tolerant, caring, economically just and equitable, progressive and prosperous and in full possession of an economy that is competitive, dynamic, robust and resilient"

The present national Education Policy is geared towards achieving this goal.

1.2 Malaysia's general educational background.

Before independence, school education in Malaysia was subjected to the general objectives of the colonial authorities, i.e. to minimize change and maintain the status quo among the different communities in the country. There were four parallel types of schooling during this period whose language of instruction was either English, Malay, Chinese or Tamil.

Generally the Malay schools offered six years of schooling to Malay children. The main educational objective was to provide the basic skills in reading, writing and arithmetic in order to make the children become better farmers and fishermen.

The Chinese set up their owned private schools. Their curriculum was very strongly oriented towards Chinese culture, with books and teachers being brought in from China. This Chinese education was influenced by contemporary political developments in China. The children were taught to read, write and use the abacus for arithmetic. In order to curb revolutionary and prejudicial attitudes toward the British authorities, the Registration of School Ordinance was established in 1920 so that the authorities could control and supervise all forms of education in Malaya.

Tamil schools were established mostly by Christian missionaries and some by employers in the rubber industries. These schools were strongly Indian-oriented and their teachers were recruited mostly from India.

Only a handful of schools were funded by the British. These concentrated mainly on writing, reading and arithmetic, but also provided opportunities to learn English. The establishment of English schools was mostly undertaken by Christian missionaries and the British authorities. These schools were located in urban areas and followed very closely the curriculum of English grammar schools.

Their main objective was to produce junior administrators to support British rule. In terms of ethnicity, only the English schools had a multi-racial make-up in their population.

The separateness of the school systems for the three main ethnic groups in Malaya resulted in each type of school having different school curriculum contents. Children were segregated by country of origin (except the English language schools). There was no attempt by the British authorities to develop a national policy of education that would unite the various ethnic communities. When Malaya gained independence in 1957, national unity became an important factor in its educational policies.

In 1955, the Federation of Malaya had its first elected government, and in 1956, a special committee was set up to review education policy. The main objective was (EPRD, 2002:6):

“...to establish a national system of education acceptable to the people of the Federation as a whole which will satisfy their needs and promote their cultural, social, economic and political development as a nation, having regard to the intention to make Malay the national language of the country whilst preserving and sustaining the growth of the language and culture of other communities living in the country”.

The committee's report, (the Razak Report), became the basis of all the later education policies. It emphasized that (EPRD, 2002:6):

“...the ultimate objective of education policy...must be to bring together the children of all races under a national education system in which the national language is the main medium of instruction...”.

Razak's main recommendations were adopted in the Education Ordinance, 1957, the year of independence. Amongst the proposals adopted was the need to:

- a. convert all primary schools to either National schools (known as Malay medium) or National type schools (Chinese, Tamil and English medium); and
- b. orientate all schools to a Malayan outlook by the introduction of a common curriculum

(Noraini, 2003:20-21)

In 1960, the education policy was revised, this time guided by the Rahman Talib Committee Report. The committee's recommendations were incorporated into the Education Act of 1961. It retained many elements of the 1957 Ordinance. Two important features of this Act were: (1) free but not compulsory primary education for all children, and (2) automatic promotion from standard 1 primary schools to form 3 secondary schools (a minimum of 9 years of formal schooling). In 1970, English ceased to be a medium of instruction in schools, and was replaced with Bahasa Malaysia (the National Language).

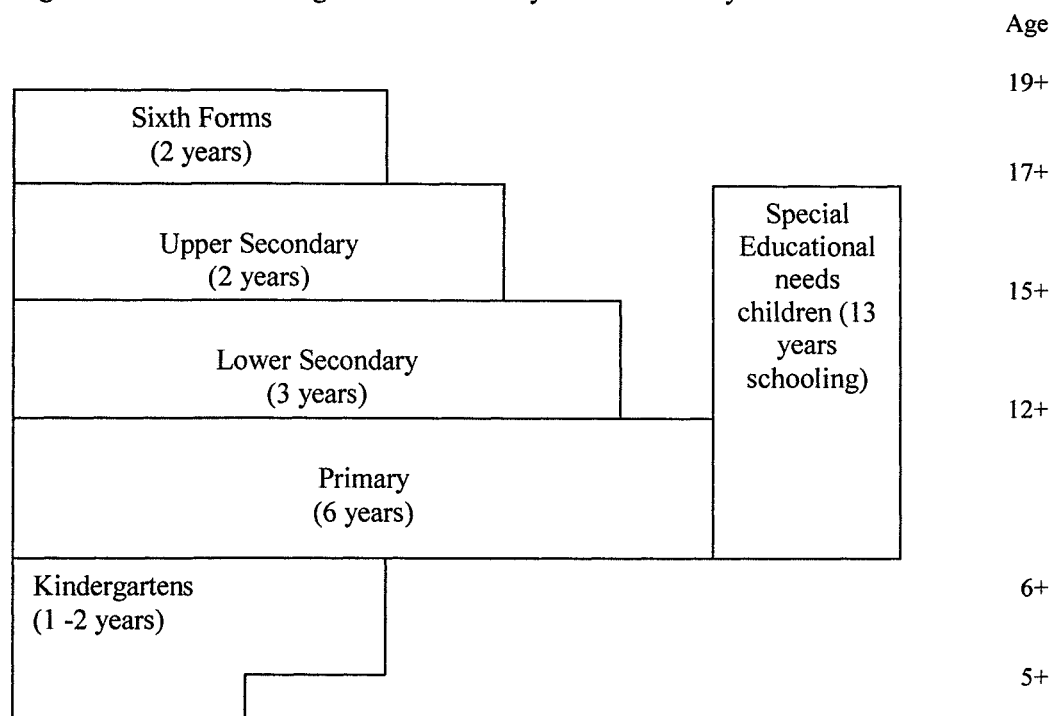
In the early 1970s, studies were done on the contributive factors and reasons for a large number of primary and secondary school children dropping out of formal education, especially in rural areas. The most important of these studies was produced by the Murad Report in 1973. As a result of this, a Cabinet Committee of Education was established to review the effectiveness of the country's education system. The Report's recommendations were specially geared towards achieving the goals of national unity in a multi-racial society, the production of skilled manpower for national developments, and the furthering of the policy to democratize education so as to guarantee every child equal educational opportunities. Democratization of education was also intended to strike a balance in all aspects of education between rural and urban areas.

In order to achieve these goals, the Report recommended the removal of unequal participation in education between urban and rural areas, the reviewing of the primary school curriculum, the development of an innovative general education programme for secondary schools, and a greater emphasis on vocational orientation in education. The Committee also recommended the upgrading of educational facilities and opportunities for children with disabilities. As the result of the Cabinet Committee Report, the Kurikulum Baru Sekolah Rendah (KBSR - New Primary School Curriculum) was introduced into Malaysian primary schools in 1983, and was fully implemented nationally in 1988. The Kurikulum Bersapadu Sekolah Menengah (KBSM - Integrated School Curriculum) was introduced into secondary schools in 1989.

1.3 The general school structure and system

The school system in Malaysia provides four stages of formal schooling, six years of primary schooling, three of lower secondary, two of upper, and two at the sixth form level (Fig. 5 : EPRD, 2003:11). It is now a common practice for Malaysian children to attend kindergarten before entering formal schooling.

Figure 5: Formal schooling structure of Malaysian education system.



1.3.1 Kindergartens

Education at the pre-school stage is mostly provided by private institutions and semi-government agencies. For children with SEN (VI and HI), voluntary organizations provide some form of services to help prepare them for formal schooling.

1.3.2 Primary schooling

Education at the primary level is free but not compulsory and begins at the age of 6. Parents may choose either the National schools or National type schools (see section 1.2). The main aim of education at this level is the overall development of the child with a firm foundation in the basic skills of reading, writing and mathematics, as well as inculcating thinking skills and moral values across the curriculum.

Primary education is divided into two phases. Phase I is from year 1 to 3 and phase 2 from year 4 to 6, but children progress from year 1 to 6 automatically. At the end of year 6 all children are required to sit the common public examination, the Primary Schools' Achievement Test (UPSR). The main reason for this assessment is to gauge whether children have acquired the minimum standard set by the Ministry in the subjects of Bahasa Malaysia, Mathematics and English Language. The UPSR results are also used by education officers to select children for residential schools. These are regarded as elite schools by the Malaysian general public.

As mentioned in section 1.3, there are two types of primary schools available for children with SEN: the special schools, which are either residential or day, and self-contained SECs in mainstream primary schools. The special schools are directly controlled by BPK, and SECs are the responsibility of the State Education Department.

Children with HI and VI identified at pre-school age or during primary education having 'normal' intelligence attend either special schools or SECs in mainstream primary schools. The Ministry provides educational provision for two types of children with learning problems (see section 1.3.3), remedial education and special education for children with LD. Children with LD who are perceived as being 'educable' at the preschool age or at any stage of primary schooling attend SECs in mainstream primary schools. The number and types of children with SEN registered with the Ministry of Education at the end of 2004 are as shown in table 4 (School Division, 2004b: 10).

Table 4 : Special school or special education class primary school children with SEN under the Ministry of Education (2002)		
Types of schools or classes	Number of	
	School classes	population
1. Visual impairment	5	249
a. special schools	8	62
b. special classes in mainstreams schools	23	2 180
2. Hearing	28	697

a. special school	103	2 449
b. special classes in mainstream schools	1	7
3. Children with learning difficulties classes in mainstreams schools		
4. Autistic special class in mainstream school		

Due to limited facilities and logistical constraints (e.g. many children with LD live far from the nearest available SECs) not all children certified as having LD can have access to the Ministry's special education programmes. Children with LD not attending SECs are catered for within the mainstream primary school remedial programme, without the special provision that is usually available in schools with SECs. The usual practice in the remedial education programme is to withdraw these children with LD from mainstream classes for a certain number of periods per week for special teaching by specialist RETs for basic numeracy and literacy skills. More often than not, these children would fail miserably to acquire such skills due to their learning difficulties. Since progression is automatic they are promoted annually and would be taught the same subject content as their more academically successful peers. If the school does not have remedial facilities, children with LD will be taught in the same mainstream class alongside their contemporaries.

Parents of children with SEN who are attending special education schools, or SECs in mainstream schools, or ordinary mainstream schools have the option of either terminating the child's formal schooling at any stage of primary education or letting the child continue schooling to lower secondary level.

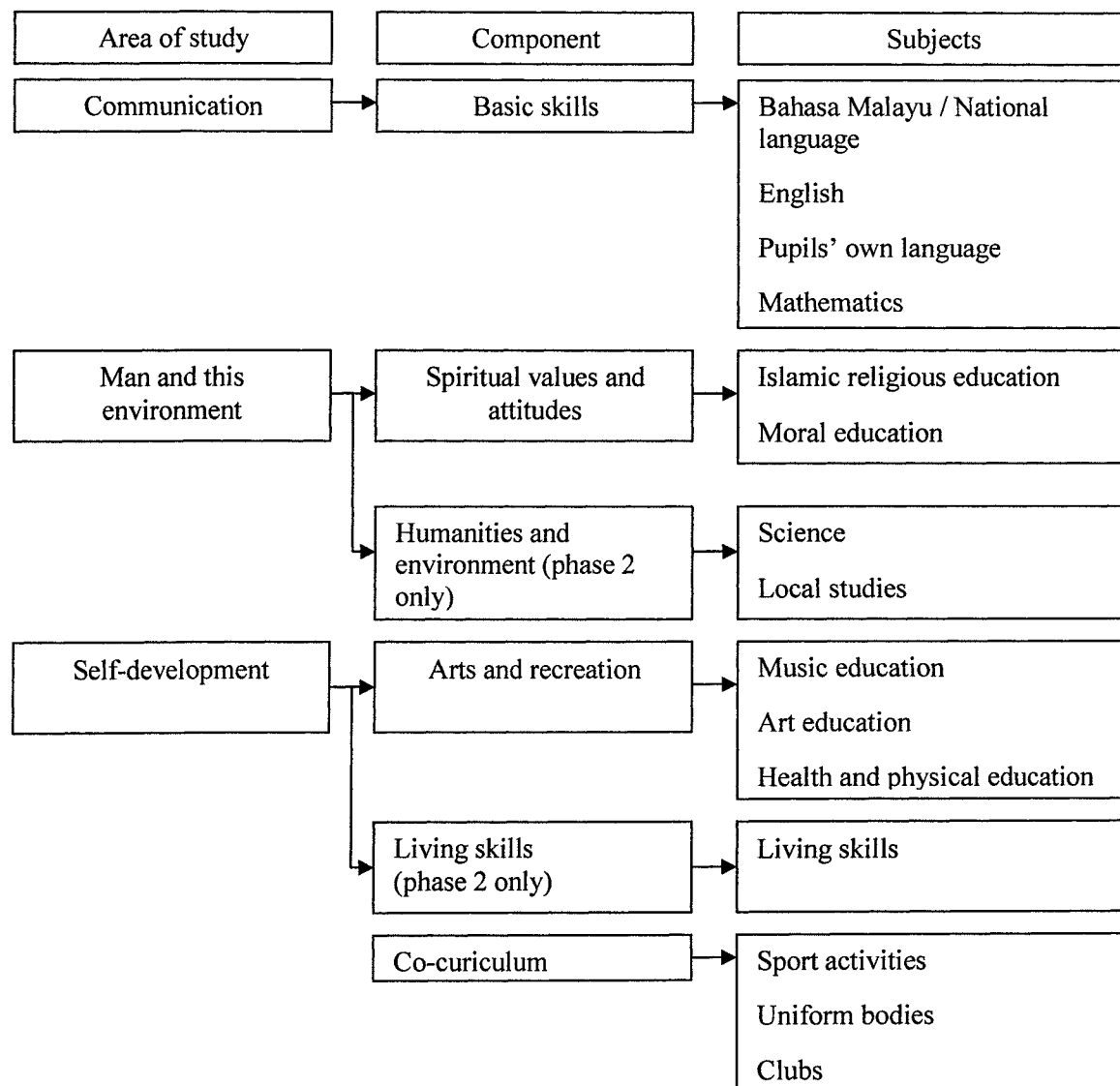
Children with SEN are also given the option of extending their primary education for an extra two years with the parents' consent. If this option is taken, children with SEN would have eight years primary schooling and would sit for UPSR at the end of the eighth year, when they are about fourteen.

1.3.3 Primary school curriculum

KBSR was fully implemented in all Malaysian primary schools in 1988. A common national school syllabus ensures that all children cover common curriculum content.

The main emphasis of KBSR is on the acquisition of the three basic skills of reading, writing and mathematics, especially for phase 1 of primary education. KBSR consists of three main study areas: communication, man and his environment, and individual self- development. The curriculum subjects and domains under each of the components are shown in Fig 6 (EPRD, 2002 : 27).

Fig 6 : The KBSR curriculum.



Children with HI and VI follow the same curriculum as mainstream children with the addition of Braille (for those with serious VI) and sign language (for those with severe HI) for the purpose of communication. For children with partial VI and HI, suitable resources are made available to facilitate their access to the primary school curriculum.

An important aspect of the KBSR is the component of remedial teaching. All RMCTs are required to give remedial teaching to children who experience difficulties with academic learning or who lag behind their peers in academic attainment. An important outcome of this practice is the early identification of children with learning problems in mainstream primary schools. Children who have serious difficulties interacting with KBSR requirements are given remedial education. Children with LD taught in SECs follow a modified version of KBSR. Many of the basic skills in literacy and numeracy (especially those taught in phase 1 primary) are retained in this modified curriculum. Added to this modified curriculum is the component of self-help skills and personal management.

1.3.4 Secondary schooling

After completing primary schooling children are promoted to lower secondary education irrespective of their performance in the UPSR examinations. Promotion in lower secondary 1 to 3 is also automatic. Children from the National primary schools are admitted into lower secondary classes and those from the National type primary schools undergo a year of transition before entering lower secondary 1. This is to enable children from National type primary schools to be proficient in Bahasa Malaysia, which is the medium of instruction in all secondary schools. At the end of the third year of lower secondary schooling, all children sit the Lower Secondary Assessment (PMR). Those who pass continue their schooling at Upper Secondary stage. Those who fail either seek employment, continue schooling in the private schools or repeat lower secondary 3 and re-sit the PMR examination.

Children who pass the PMR have the choice of continuing their formal schooling in the academic, technical or vocational schools. Upper secondary education covers a period of two

years. At the end of the second year, academic and technical school students sit the Certificate of Education (SPM) examination and the vocational schools students sit the Vocational Certificate of Education (SPVM) examination.

After completing primary schooling children with SEN have the choice of continuing their schooling in Ministry of Education secondary schools or in Ministry of National Unity and Social Development Ministry institutions. Normally children with HI and VI continue their lower secondary schooling either in special schools or in mainstream secondary schools. Only those children perceived as being able to cope with the demands of mainstream class learning with a minimum of help are included in mainstream secondary classes. Children with VI have to be sufficiently literate in Braille and able to move freely within the secondary school. Children with HI have to be proficient in sign language. Usually children with VI and HI in mainstream secondary schools are boarded in the schools' hostels. After three years of lower secondary education, they sit the Penilaian Menengah Rendah (PMR-Lower Certificate of Education Examination). If they pass they proceed to upper secondary and sit the Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia (SPM- Malaysian Certificate of Education Examination) or Sijil Pendidikan Vokasional Malaysia (SPVM- Malaysian Certificate of Vocational Education Examination). If they are successful they can continue into higher education.

Table: 5 Special secondary schools or special education classes and secondary school children with SEN under the Ministry of Education (2003)		
Types of schools or classes	Number of	
	schools/ classes	population
1. Visual impairment		
a. special schools	1	77
b. special classes in mainstream schools	12	148
2. Hearing impairment	2	494
a. special schools	18	447
b. special classes in mainstream schools	4	89
3. Children with LD classes in mainstream schools		

Children with VI and HI attending special schools for their secondary education also follow the same curriculum as mainstream children at the lower secondary stage of schooling. After PMR, they too can either pursue academic excellence to the highest level in mainstream secondary schools or special schools or take up vocational training programmes offered by centers for the visually or hearing impaired. The number of secondary schools children with SEN of VI, HI, and LD registered with the Ministry of Education by the end of 2003 is as shown in table 5 (School Division, 2003b : 10).

Children with LD proceed to post-primary education if their parents, after receiving professional advice, wish it. Parents can also choose to enroll their child in institutions under the jurisdiction of Ministry of the National Unity and Social Development. Here the child with LD is given vocational training suitable to his or her capabilities and interests. Hopefully these skills will enable the securement of future employment. The third option is simply to keep the child at home.

Children with LD do not follow the same curriculum as mainstream secondary school children. They usually continue their secondary education by following the modified version of KBSR. They are not usually expected to sit the PMR examination.

1.4 Special Education in Malaysia

Immediately after independence, the government's main educational focus was on providing educational facilities for the majority of children who did not require specialised teaching. Providing for the needs of children with disabilities was considered expensive since it was perceived to benefit only a very small proportion of the school-age population. Officially, the government did recognise that children with disabilities had the right to formal schooling.

However, the majority of children with disabilities in Malaysia did not receive any form of formal education. One can speculate on the many possible reasons for this: guilt and embarrassment of parents and occasionally of children themselves about their impairments; complex factors that somehow lead to children with obvious learning difficulties being kept at home. Negative attitudes in the general public towards disabled persons may also have contributed towards delaying the implementation of a special education programme in Malaysia. Lack of empathy towards disabled persons could be attributed to a lack of knowledge among the general public about problems facing persons with special needs. This was not surprising since the most visibly disabled persons that were frequently encountered by the general public, especially in towns and cities, were mainly beggars, regarded as a nuisance.

Till 1948, provision for educational and social services for disabled persons was in the hands of family members, and of voluntary organizations run by community groups, and of religious-based institutions (Islamic, Buddhist, Hindu or Christian). In 1926, Anglican missionaries started the first institution for the blind, the St. Nicholas Home in the state of Malacca. The British government's first formal involvement in the education of disabled persons began in 1948, with the building of the Princess Elizabeth School for the Blind in the state of Johore. The school was initially organized and administered by the Malaysian Society for the Blind, but in August 1980 it became fully government aided.

Recognising that hearing impaired persons also have special educational needs (SEN), the Federated School for the Deaf was initiated in 1954. This school, located in Penang, offers both academic and vocational training.

The Education Act of 1961 stated that the Ministry of Education is responsible for guidelines for all or any of the following areas within special education (Zalizan, 2003:4),

“...The defining of the several categories of pupils requiring special educational treatment and the methods appropriate for the education of pupils in each category in special schools or otherwise”.

The Cabinet Committee Report in 1979, in its review of the national education system, (Wan Kalthom, 2001:29) stated that

“... the government should be responsible for the education of handicapped children. It is recommended that the government should completely assume this responsibility of providing education from the organizations that are managing it at present. Besides, the participation of voluntary organizations to improving the education of the handicapped children should continue to be encouraged”.

Early recognition by the Ministry of Education of the special needs of children with visual impairment (VI) and hearing impairment (HI) and the Cabinet Committee Report's recommendations resulted in the Ministry taking over the administration of special schools from the voluntary sector. The Ministry also established new special schools and initiated the formation of the special education class (SEC) in mainstream primary schools to cater for the increasing educational demands of children with VI and HI.

Remedial education began in Malaysia in 1965 with the placement of three teachers trained in England in mainstream primary schools in the state of Selangor (Chua and Koh, 1992). In 1975, the Ministry recognised that children with learning problems had SEN, so special remedial education classes were introduced in selected mainstream primary schools. The main purpose of this was to offer educational help to children in rural areas considered to be educationally disadvantaged.

An important outcome of the Cabinet Committee's recommendations was the establishment of educational provision for children considered to be mentally impaired/retarded. During this period such children had no educational provision under the Ministry of Education

jurisdiction, and so the policy of democratization of education (equal educational opportunities) was extended to include those children whom the Ministry considered to be 'educable'. The Report also made the following recommendations in relation to special education (Ministry of Education, 1988: 229 and 264):

- a. To provide schooling for special needs children who are the responsibility of the Ministry of Education (blind and deaf) by strengthening it in terms of resources and facilities;
- b. To allow children with hearing impairment to start formal schooling before the age of six;
- c. To improve opportunities for higher education attainment amongst youths from the disadvantaged group;
- d. To incorporate a component of special education (remedial) into the primary school curriculum.

The plight of disabled persons in Malaysia was given the attention it deserved in 1981 with the United Nations declaring that to be the Year of the Disabled Person. Efforts were made by the relevant authorities to inform the general public about the need to provide disabled persons with appropriate job skills. This would enable them to seek employment, to be independent and also to contribute towards the country's economic development. The general public was told that disabled persons needed to be given the chance to develop their potential, and that education was of the utmost importance in achieving this. Thus, a prime motivation in providing formal education for children with disabilities was commercial interest. The intention was to make the disabled person a productive member of society in the economic sense.

The Cabinet Committee's recommendations and the United Nation's declaration resulted in 1981 in the formation of an Inter-Ministerial Committee for the education of children with disabilities. The agreement was that education for children with disabilities would be shared between the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Social Welfare (re-named Ministry of National Unity and Social Development). Health aspects and early interventions would be under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Health.

1.4.1 Ministry of National Unity and Social Development: the special education programme

The Ministry of National Unity and Social Development was to be responsible for the education of children with:

- a. physical handicaps (cerebral palsy and orthopaedic disabilities);
- b. severe and profound mental retardation;
- c. multiple handicaps;
- d. handicapping conditions that would make it impossible to enroll them in schools under Ministry of Education jurisdiction.

(School Division. 2002b:3)

Besides education, the same Ministry would also accept responsibility for:

- a. the registration of the population with special needs;
- b. providing provision of financial assistance and the purchase of specialised equipment (for those with low socio-economic status);
- c. planning and implementing community-based rehabilitation programmes;
- d. organizing training programmes for children with disabilities who do not wish to enter secondary schooling after finishing primary education; and
- e. job placement of special adults (in co-operation with the Ministry of Labour).

(School Division. 2002b:3)

In 1985, the Ministry embarked on a programme to encourage Malaysian disabled people to register voluntarily with the Ministry. An estimated 1% of the Malaysian population was either born with or had acquired physical, mental or sensory impairments. The total estimate was put at 180,000 (Social Welfare Department, 2003). By the end of 2003, the actual number registered with the Ministry was only 53,882. The numbers and categories are as in table 1 (Social Welfare Department, 2003:2).

Table: 1 Disabled people registered with the Ministry of National Unity and Social Development (2002)	
Types of impairment	Total numbers
Visual	10 048
Hearing	10 093
Physical	18 835
Mentally impaired	14 906
Total	53 882

The number of children with disabilities under the age of 6 years registered by the end of 2002 are as in Table 2 (Social Welfare Department, 2003:4).

Table: 2 Children with impairment registered with the Ministry of National Unity and Social Development (2002)	
Types of impairment	Total numbers
Visual	22
Hearing	113
Physical	85
Mentally impaired	361
Total	581

From these two tables it would appear that the majority of the estimated population with disabilities was still reluctant to register. Efforts were increased by the Ministry to encourage registration so that, subject to the national economy, their numbers could be properly ascertained and appropriate help extended to those who required it. However most societies are aware of a longstanding reluctance in parents generally to experience the almost inevitable sense of stigma that can follow from the identification of severe mental impairment in a child.

1.4.2 Screening of children with impairment

The Ministry of Health has the task of early identification and screening of children at risk. The Ministry's medical and paramedical personnel are responsible for the curative and preventive aspects regarding early intervention of children with impairment.

For pre-school children in Malaysia efforts to identify the occurrence of impairments would be undertaken from the time of birth. All new-born babies would be given the necessary vaccinations as a preventive measure. Once a child is identified as being impaired (physical or sensory), curative measures are undertaken to minimize the effect on the child's development. The School Health Services would continue to care for the child from pre-school to school-going age and adolescence.

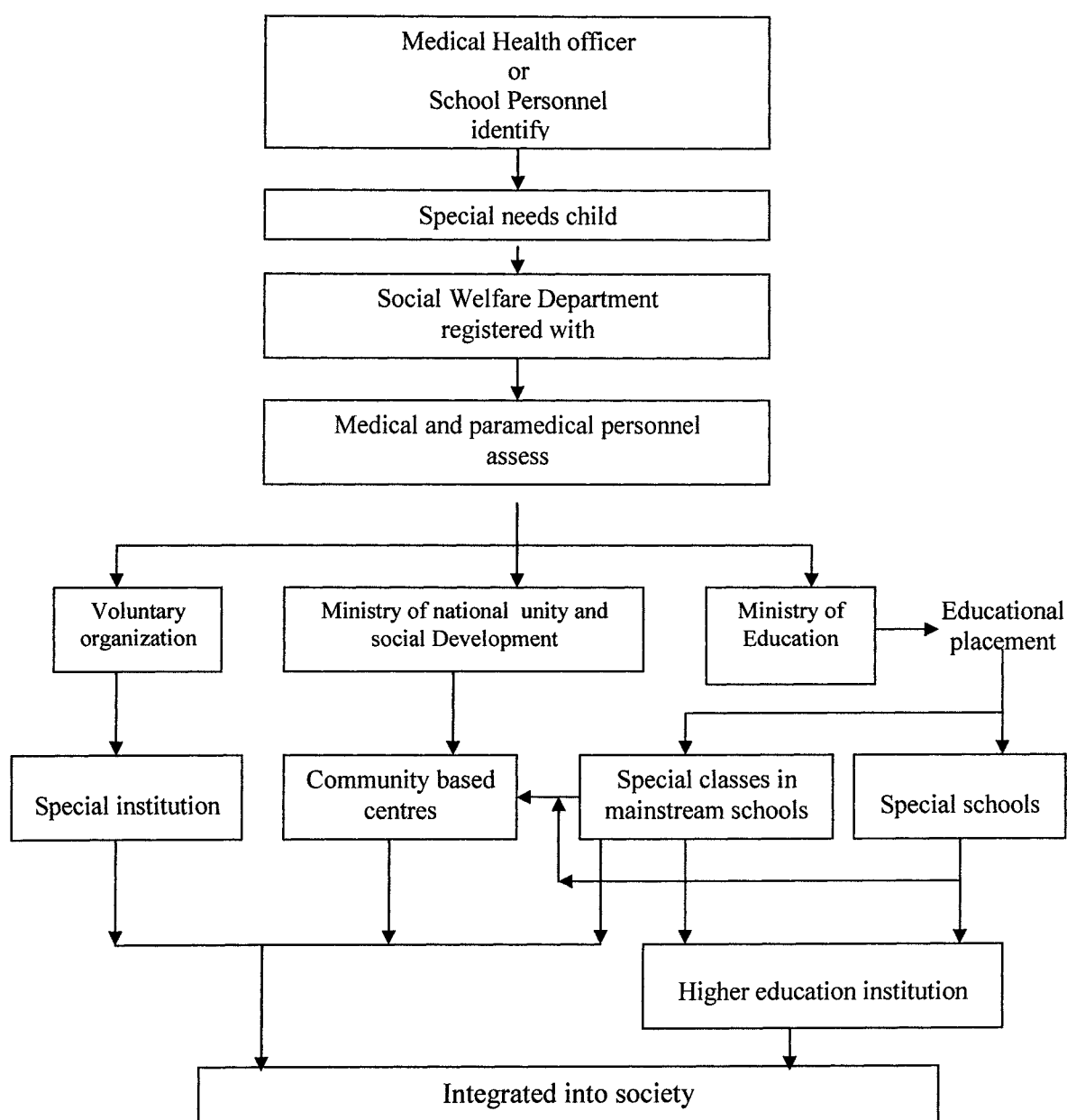
At the school level, identifying children with impairment is undertaken by two authorities, the School Health Service and the school personnel. The School Health Service prioritises screening at year 1 (age 6+) and year 6 (11+) at the primary stage, and secondary 3 (14+) and secondary 5 (16+) at the secondary level. The main purpose of the screening is to detect any impairment or potential impairment in mainstream children.

Parents of children identified as having some form of impairment are strongly advised to register with the Ministry of National Unity and Social Development. Once registered, the child would be given a comprehensive medical examination to assess the overall state of the impairment. The Medical Officer of Health's assessment report would be used to decide the child's educational placement in liaison with the Ministry of Education and Ministry of National Unity and Social Development.

The task of identifying children regarded as 'educable' mentally impaired/retarded with no medical records and no observable signs of impairment at the primary school level is the responsibility of school personnel, but there is no legal requirement of them to do so. Once these children are identified, and their parents have registered them with the Ministry of National Unity and Social Development, they are assessed by the medical officers for

appropriate educational placement in SECs in mainstream primary schools if places are available (Fig 1).

Fig. 1 Identification placement of children with disabilities



1.4.3 The Ministry of Education's special education programme

The Ministry of Education is responsible for educating children with the following disabilities:

- a. Hearing impairment;
- b. Visual impairment;
- c. Acknowledged as being 'educable' mentally impaired/retarded; and
- d. Mildly autistic (from 1988).

(School Division, 2002b:3)

Thus, the Ministry of Education is given the responsibility for educating children who are 'educable' but mentally impaired/retarded. This marks the beginning of an official recognition by the Ministry that children with intellectual impairment need a special kind of educational provision and resourcing compared to mainstream children. Educationally these children are referred to as children with learning difficulties (LD) by the Ministry.

Before 1981, the educational needs of children with LD who attended mainstream primary schooling were met within the school's remedial education programme, if such provision existed. The main focus of the remedial programme was to improve the child's proficiency in literacy and numeracy. Yet disappointingly, whether due to intrinsic or extrinsic factors, many of these children failed miserably in their academic achievements even with remedial provision, and were regarded as failures by the school. There was no educational provision other than the existing remedial programme for these children as they progressed through the primary school to lower secondary (assuming they did not leave school earlier).

For primary schools without a remedial programme, the responsibility of providing for the educational needs of children with LD would lie with the class teachers, within the means of the school's available resources as prescribed by the requirements stipulated in the Kurikulum Bersepadu Sekolah Rendah (KBSR). In many cases these children would lag further and further behind their mainstream peers in terms of academic attainments at every stage of their primary schooling.

There was no provision for a differential primary school curriculum for children with LD before 1988. In the context of the existing KBSR, these children were labeled failures, both by the school establishment and the public generally.

In 1981, the Ministry of Education, through its Unit Pendidikan Khas (UPK- Special Education Unit, reorganized in October 2003) established the SEC for children with LD. Officially only 'educable' children with LD whom the Ministry of Education perceived as being able to benefit educationally through formal schooling would be accepted into these SECs.

The trend internationally in the 1980s was to integrate these classes into mainstream schools. In line with this trend, and to speed up its formation it was decided by UPK that SECs should be an extension of the mainstream primary school. Locating SECs in mainstream schools would hopefully ensure that children with LD would receive an education conducive to developing their social interaction skills and personal individual development.

Realizing that children with LD would not be able to cope with the existing KBSR, UPK designed a different primary school curriculum. This was a modified, easier version of the KBSR, complementary to the national curriculum.

UPK also decided that priority for entry to these SECs would be given to children with LD already attending mainstream primary schools. When first established, UPK attached three main conditions to be satisfied before these children could be admitted to SECs:

- (1) Only children who failed to interact totally with the KBSR after being given remedial help would be considered.
- (2) The child had to be certified by medical professionals as being a child with mental impairment.
- (3) Since there would be no residential facilities available, parents of the selected children would have to provide their own means of transport to and from schools where SECs were located.

Interestingly, the first group of children identified as LD who were admitted to Special Education Classes (SECs) initiated by UPK were mainly from mainstream primary schools. It was argued that these children would benefit from the special teaching, resourcing and curriculum which were not available in their previous schools. Subsequently, children with LD were given direct entry into SECs by virtue of being recommended by the medical profession, once they had satisfied the conditions for entry.

The first SEC for children with LD located in a mainstream primary school under the Ministry of Education jurisdiction was established in 1988 in Kuala Lumpur, the national capital. Eventually other SECs were opened throughout the country. Officially these special classes were either called **Kelas Pendidikan Khas** (Special Education Class) or **Kelas Kanak-Kanak Bermasalah Pembelajaran** (Children with Learning Difficulties Class). Due to the negative connotation of these, there was a move to rename these special classes to **Kelas Kanak-Kanak Istimewa** (Exceptional Children Class).

The Ministry of Education also provides educational resources to children with remedial needs or to slow learners even though these children are excluded from the Ministry's special education programmes. For example the Ministry is responsible for the training of specialist RETs and for providing appropriate facilities for remedial classes within mainstream schools.

By the end of 2003, Malaysia had two types of special education programme for children with learning difficulties under the Ministry of Education at the primary level:

(1) remedial education, and (2) special education. Remedial education is for children who have difficulties in mastering the basic skills of literacy and numeracy as prescribed in the KBSR. Socially and academically, children with remedial educational needs are perceived as being able to function 'normally' in a mainstream classroom environment. Hence administratively, these children by definition are not recognized as having special educational needs by UPK. Therefore, they are not considered part of the UPK's responsibility, and thus are not included in the Ministry's special education programme.

Within the Malaysian Ministry of Education special education by definition is only for those children with VI and HI and the 'educable' mentally impaired (LD). In 1988, children with a mild autistic tendency were included in this programme. Children with LD were perceived as having severe difficulty in acquiring basic skills in literacy and numeracy. Behaviourally they were also regarded as not being able to function 'normally' within the mainstream classroom. Children with SEN under the UPK administration are still being educated in SECs in mainstream schools or in special institutions at the primary level.

1.5 Special Education In Malaysia: its policy, philosophy, aims and objectives

Malaysia subscribed to various United Nations' Declarations. Amongst these was the United Nations' World Programme of Action Concerning Disabled Persons (1983), the World Declaration on Education for All (1990), and the United Nations' Standard Rules-on the Equalisation of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities (1993). The Government accepted the Framework for Action on Special Needs Education, which was adopted by the Government of Spain in co-operation with UNESCO (1994). This became the guiding principle in planning and implementing special education programmes for children with disabilities in Malaysia. Thus the Malaysian Government in principle accepts that children with disabilities are entitled to the best possible education the country can provide.

The government's recommendations, especially in regard to the democratization of education, were used forcefully by the government special education officers to argue for the right of children with disabilities to get the best education affordable economically. Democratization of education was not only for balancing educational opportunities between rural and urban school populations, but also for extending educational opportunities to children with disabilities. Hence the Malaysian Government via the Ministry of Education and Ministry of National Unity and Social Development tried to translate the concept and principles of democratization of education into action by giving children with disabilities access to basic, universal education by improving the quality of the learning environment and by establishing centres of excellence.

One of the targets of Vision 2020 had an important bearing on the education of children with disabilities, i.e. the conceptualisation of a 'caring society'. According to this concept, Malaysia, besides being an industrialised nation, must also be able to build:

"...a fully caring society and a caring culture, a social system in which society will come before self, in which the welfare of the people will revolve not around the state or the individual but around a strong and resilient family system".

(Wan Kalthom, 2001:13),

This notion of the 'caring society' implies that the disadvantaged individual will be enabled to receive support, both emotional and material, as much from the social grouping in which he lives as from the state and its organized provision. In other words besides striving to become an affluent society by the year 2020, Malaysia should also have a strong feeling of empathy towards the needs of its disabled citizens, based on strong family bonds. Hopefully Malaysia would be able to sustain the current traditional practice of family members supporting each other even in a fully developed industrialised nation. Thus a hitherto disadvantaged population will form one of the focus groups in pursuit of establishing a Malaysian 'caring society'.

The goal of producing quality manpower for national development was also put forward as an argument for giving quality education to Malaysian children with disabilities. Since Malaysia does not provide income support to its unemployed, it is essential that children with disabilities be trained with employable skills so that they do not become a burden to their families, so as to avoid, if possible, enforced dependency.

The concepts of a 'caring society' and self-employment were important considerations in implementing current education policies for children with SEN i.e. children with disabilities under the Ministry of Education's special education programme.

Specifically the Ministry aims:

- a. to provide children with SEN with the essential intellectual, affective and psychomotor skills in a holistic and integrated manner so as to produce individuals who are intellectually, physically, emotionally and spiritually balanced and functionally literate;
- b. to inculcate and nurture national consciousness in children with SEN through fostering of common ideals, values, aspirations and loyalties in order to mould a national unity as well as a Malaysian national identity in a multi-ethnic society;
- c. to produce special needs manpower with the prerequisite skills for economic and national development;
- d. to inculcate children with SEN with the desired moral (Malaysian) values and promote personality and aesthetic development as well as the sense of being responsible, disciplined and progressive, enabling them to contribute effectively towards nation building.

In order to achieve these aims, the Ministry of Education was of the opinion that educational services for children with SEN should be provided within the general educational framework. In line with international practice, it decided that education for Malaysian children with SEN after 1981 should be in the form of the 'least restrictive environment' possible, within the constraint of resources available and an environment setting that would maximize learning potential. Hopefully children provided with SEN education opportunities would:

- a. experience success and acceptance and develop a sense of self-accomplishment. It is important for these children to realise that they do not have to achieve high academic excellence to survive in society;
- b. develop respect and tolerance for others;
- c. enjoy the act of learning as a life-long process;
- d. acquire, use and master communication and basic computational skills;
- e. develop critical and creative thinking skills;
- f. acquire the necessary knowledge and skills in the recreational, physical and cultural

domain; and

- g. develop the ability to cope with the changing demands of society.

One of the steps taken by the Ministry to maximize the achievement of the listed objectives for children with SEN was to adopt the model of establishing SECs in mainstream schools for all children with LD. As for children with VI and HI, two models of primary schooling were adopted, (1) special education schools, and (2) SECs in mainstream primary schools, and full placement in mainstream secondary schools.

1.6 Review of the Malaysian special education programme

Even though children with SEN are excluded from mainstream classes at the primary stage of schooling, full placement in mainstream classes in secondary schools is being practiced for those with VI. Generally, these children are assumed to have ‘normal’ intelligence and thus are perceived to be able to function effectively in mainstream classes if appropriate resources are provided.

In the early 1990s, UPK began to review its special education programme, even though the programme for children with LD was still at the infancy stage. One of the main reasons for this review was the United Nations’ ‘Standard Rules on the Equalisation of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities’, (annex 1), which states:

“The necessity of meeting all children’s basic learning needs within the framework of education for all in an Inclusive school, has opened up new possibilities of increased educational provision for children with special educational needs within the regular school system”.(Kamariah, 2002b: 3),

As part of a strategy towards the realisation of ‘caring society’ principles, the Ministry of Education decided to upgrade the quality of its special education programme. It tries to provide children with SEN equal education opportunities as accorded to the country’s other children so that they can become happy and useful citizens. The first step taken to do this was the restructuring of the UPK.

In October 2002, the status of UPK was upgraded to a departmental division of the Ministry of Education, known as Special Education Division (BPK). BPK's main responsibility is to ensure the effectiveness of the Ministry of Education's special education programme and to continue with the policies of the previous UPK. One of these was the subsequent implementation of IE i.e. the placement of children with SEN in mainstream classes nationally. The Ministry of Education aimed to implement IE for all children with SEN in Malaysian mainstream primary schools by the year 2010.

1.7 Special education teachers

Prior to the 1950's, personnel from the Social Services Department were sent to special schools and centres to gain experience in caring for special needs, and they assumed responsibility for this provision, aided by voluntary workers.

After independence, the training of special education personnel especially teachers became the responsibility of the Ministry Of Education. At the initial stage, the Ministry sent five selected teachers to the United States, United Kingdom, Australia and New Zealand for a one year diploma course in the various fields of special education (Noraini, 2001). Upon their return, they were placed in special schools to work with children with SEN and later became lecturers in specialist teacher training colleges in Malaysia.

In 1962, the Ministry began the training of specialist teachers for children with VI at the Specialist Teacher's Training Institute (MPIK) in Kuala Lumpur. The courses were open to in-service teachers. In 1963, the college started a programme for in-service teachers interested in working with children with HI. It is still offering both courses. In 1977, a remedial teacher training programme was added to the specialist teacher programmes at MPIK. In order to meet the demand for specialist RETs, the Teacher Training Division (BPG) of the Ministry of Education started vocational and weekend courses for experienced teachers at various colleges of education. In 1990, MPIK remedial specialist programmes were transferred to the new Darulaman Teacher Training Institution (IPDA) in Melaka. Today there are three teacher

training colleges in Malaysia which offer remedial specialist programmes: IPDA, Kota Bharu Teacher Training College (MPKB) in Kelantan and Mohd Khalid Teachers College (MPMK) in Johore. The introduction of full-time programmes in remedial education at MPKB and MPMK resulted in the closure of the remedial vocation and weekend courses organized by BPG.

In 1991, as a result of the establishment of SECs for children with LD, MPIK added another programme for specialist teachers. When the first SEC for the children with LD was established, and with the subsequent opening of other classes, specialist RETs were recruited to teach these children. By the end of 2003, the number of specialist teachers in the four areas of special education trained locally is as shown in table 3 (Teacher Training Division, 2003:20):

Table:3 Specialist teachers trained by Malaysian colleges of education (2003)	
Area of specialty	Numbers
Visual impairments	231
Hearing impairments	485
Remedial education	486
Learning difficulties	104

In 1993, the Ministry of Education established its first degree programme in special education. There were two types of degree programme offered:

(1) the twinning programme, jointly run by the National University of Malaysia (UKM) and MPIK. This programme was designed especially for college trained teachers with specialist training certificate who are interested in pursuing their studies at degree level. (2) a programme that is run entirely by UKM. The first local degree graduates in special education qualified in June 1997.

The introduction in 1983 of KBSR, with its strong emphasis on within class remedial teaching, resulted in the introduction of the component of remedial education in the pre-service teacher training curriculum by BPG in all Malaysian colleges of education. The requirement in KBSR is for regular mainstream classroom teachers (RMCT) to undertake

classroom remedial teaching to children who lag behind their peers in academic achievement, especially in basic literacy and numeracy skills. It is hoped that by training RMCTs for competence in remedial education, close co-operation can also be forged between these RMCTs and specialist RETs in overcoming an individual child's learning problems at the school level.

The impending implementation of IE in mainstream primary schools would require RMCTs to accommodate children with SEN learning in their everyday teaching programmes in partnership with specialised personnel, if necessary. The success of IE depends very much on the RMCTs' understanding of the concept, and, in preparation for its eventual implementation, BPG revised the pre-service college of education syllabus. In June 1995, BPG introduced the component of IE into the fourth semester syllabus of pre-service teacher training programmes, i.e. every teacher trainee now must do a compulsory IE component.

1.8 Summary

Prior to 1979, the Ministry of Education was responsible in the field of special education only for children with VI and HI. Children with LD were and continue to be educated in mainstream classes of mainstream schools. These children are being given special remedial provision (if the schools have these facilities) to improve their literacy and numeracy skills. However it is not surprising, because of their intellectual impairments, that children with LD were unable to cope with the demands of the KBSR if receiving merely remedial support.

The Cabinet Committee Report (1979) recommended that the Malaysian Government should assume the responsibility of providing education for children with disabilities from voluntary organizations. The government accepted this recommendation, and these responsibilities are divided between the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of National Development and National Unity.

The Report was also significant because for the first time the Ministry of Education officially acknowledged that there are children with learning problems in mainstream schools who require modification of the national curriculum or modified access to the national curriculum. However instead of seizing the opportunity to initiate a new form of support within mainstream classes themselves, the Ministry took the arguably easier pathway of setting up self-contained SECs located within a restricted number of mainstream schools, where the focus of learning for these children was to be basic living skills.

Malaysia, through its Ministry of Education, is currently re-evaluating its special education programmes and practices. The present government lays emphasis on an enlargement of public involvement in social welfare and educational provision, as is exemplified in the Prime Minister's 'caring society' Statement (Cabinet Report 2004). It is acknowledged by those in charge of special education programmes that segregating children with disabilities in special schools or SECs is not compatible with the 'caring' concept. Thus it comes about that the Ministry is currently engaged in evaluating plans for the implementation of IE in mainstream primary schools, to the great interest of many specialist teachers, and doubtless to the parents of many children themselves. However the point has been made, and it is one with which the author of this investigation is fully in agreement, that the goal of IE is not achievable by mere legislation, and that Malaysia has yet to recognise and understand the very fundamental difference between integrated and inclusive education. If adequately achieved, IE would change Malaysia's present educational administration, structures, systems and practices to a degree that would impact on the country's teaching profession as a whole.

The Malaysian educational process conventionally emphasizes academic attainment and the mastery of basic literacy and numeracy skills. Compared with developed countries there is a relative uniformity of educational practice across Malaysia, with the unfortunate consequence that Malaysian teachers are required rigidly to follow the national curriculum as prescribed by the Ministry of Education, even when teaching children with SEN. Thus, children with disabilities are expected not only to cope with the national curriculum but also to sit the same national curriculum examination alongside more able children. In other words, children with SEN regardless of their impairments are required to face the challenge of attaining the same

standard of scholastic achievement as their mainstream peers, after two extra years in primary education.

The prevailing philosophy of special education in Malaysia is “holistic”, and focuses on the overall development of children with SEN (see section 1.4). Sadly, this does not encourage the discovery of the strengths and capabilities of individual children with disabilities. If the Ministry wishes to realise its aim of making these children employable, it may have to revise its special education teaching priorities, so as to encourage the individual child with SEN to discover and develop talents and/ or special skills during the years of his or her statutory education. Such skills may then hopefully be further developed and utilised to the child’s advantage in future years. So, in order to understand the direction of change that IE implies, it is necessary to discuss current Malaysian school organization and its relation to special educational practice. in the chapter which follows.



Inclusive Education

This chapter aims to discuss the concept of IE which has been accorded a considerable amount of importance by the BPK (Special Education Department) in order to create a caring society in line with Prime Minister's proposed nine strategic challenges to make Malaysia a fully developed nation by the year 2020 (Mahathir, 1997). Since IE is a much newer concept for Malaysia than for some other countries, the chapter looks at the historical evolution of the concept and its implementation in a global context. The second part of the chapter will look at IE in the Malaysian context.

2.1 International Perspective

Since its foundation in 1961 it has fallen to the internationally established Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) to compile statistics on a worldwide basis, including data on schoolchildren with disabilities, difficulties and disadvantages. The number of categories of definitions used varies widely from country to country, as do their national labels. OECD data show the classification of school children in receipt of additional resources in the three broad cross-national categories of disabilities, difficulties and disadvantages. Those in the "disabilities" category (A) have clear organic bases for their difficulties. Those in the "difficulties" category (B) have learning and behaviour difficulties which do not appear to be due to either a clear organic basis or social disadvantage. Those in the "disadvantages" category (C) receive additional educational resources due to aspects of their social and/or language background. However the terminology used within these broad categories varies widely from one country to another, and in recent decades there has occurred much revision of the terms regularly used to identify children whose learning is not proceeding conventionally. This is a point which will be returned to again within this chapter.

2.1.1 Children with SEN and the terminology relating to 'special needs'

At the heart of the discussion relating to the field of 'special educational needs' is a definition of this term, first coined by Warnock in 1978 and then widely adopted in English speaking countries. Hence The United Nations' Statistical Survey issued in 1988 distinguished between three aspects of the term 'special'. It was related to impairment, disability and handicap. 'Impairment' is used to describe the child's loss of function at the organic level. 'Disability' is used to describe the loss of function at the level of the person. Disability (of the person) may result in a child's being ill-equipped to interact with the environment, thus creating a 'handicap' or disadvantage.

The Warnock Report itself (1978) defined SEN in the context of the school curriculum, of the means of accessing it, and of the social and emotional environment in which the child is taught. Thus the essentially diagnostic question: what is wrong with the child? was replaced by the more operational question: what should be provided for a child to maximise his or her learning achievement? The Report formed the basis of the 1981 Education Act in England and Wales. It tried to make available a whole range and variety of additional help in order to overcome educational difficulties however they were caused (Cox, 1985).

The Act defined SEN in terms of a learning difficulty. The term SEN is all-embracing and refers to children: (1) who have significantly greater difficulty in learning compared to the majority of other children of their own age, and (2) whose disability prevents or hinders them from making full use of the educational facilities of the kind generally provided in schools (Cox, 1985). However in the past twenty-five years there has grown some increasing resistance to this terminology and therefore in a sense to the very concept of special educational needs, on the grounds that the term itself serves to marginalise disabled children and to suggest that their needs are different from everyone else's. It also has very general applications, not necessarily related to disability, but to those who do not conform to sociocultural expectations at many levels. The term can be interpreted in so many different ways that it may at times be considered less than helpful.

However in the language of educational legislation the term 'special educational needs' is widely used, and it is here that the word 'special' acquires an even more negative association. In this context, the term 'special' suggests 'different' and 'separate' rather than 'out of the ordinary' in a positive sense. The term continues to be used from time to time in the developing discussion about inclusive education because it is the language commonly used in legislation and is therefore difficult to avoid. Nevertheless there is a growing body of opinion that the long accepted language of special education operates in several ways as a barrier to the development of new ways of serving the interests of children of all levels of ability. Billington (2000) for example argues that the multiple meanings that may lie within apparently discrete, legally or medically defined terms may operate not only to confuse thinking and decision making regarding children with difficulties but also send them down a path which excludes and pathologizes them. The situation becomes further complicated when other established practices used in the diagnostic identification of children meriting special help include the use of examinations and tests which rely on values and assumptions about ability which are considered by some writers to pose serious barriers to inclusive learning and social relations (Aspis 2001).

My own judgement in this area of debate is based more on my recognition of special teachers' practical needs than on the appeal of currently fashionable academic argument. Indeed much of the theoretical literature which argues for an abandonment of established terminology relating to special educational needs tends to be philosophical and somewhat abstruse, so much so that the average teacher practitioner, even one experienced in serving the needs of 'hard to place' children, might find it difficult to understand the motives and the aims of committed proponents of inclusive practice. During the past century both the teaching profession and the general public have come to understand that successive terminologies relating to learning difficulty and deficiency, which were originally created with the intention of serving the requirements of learners who could not define their own needs, have most of them in turn become vulgarized and regarded as terms of abuse. In my judgement there is little virtue in repeatedly abandoning successive terminologies which are rationally derived and which have achieved general acceptance by the teaching profession and by those parents who understand and accept that they do have children who are slow to learn. This said, I take

my discussion forward to the fundamental issue of my investigation into inclusive thinking and practice.

2.1.2 Inclusive Education (IE)

Internationally, Inclusion evolved from the practice of integration which initially involved moving children with SEN from segregated educational settings to mainstream school environments and was considered to be a process of increasing the participation of children with SEN in the educational and social life of the whole school (Booth 1989, Fulcher, 1989 and Pearson and Lindsay, 1988). What is at issue is the interpretation and implementation of inclusion in practice. There is need of a dual approach focusing on both the rights of children and the effectiveness of their education. There is a need to develop beyond concerns about inputs and settings to a focus on experience and outcomes and to attempt to identify causal relationships. Research is needed to inform policy and practice, but research that is rigorous. In addition to descriptive case studies of examples of 'good practice,' useful though these can be, there is need of careful analysis to examine whether 'good' practice is an appropriate prescription. Lindsay (2003) states the case for more highly developed, substantial studies using quasi-experimental approaches to examine the strengths and relative impacts of a range of factors together with qualitative examination of the experience of key participants. Rigorous, substantial research projects demonstrating effectiveness are required to enhance the process of addressing children's rights (Lindsay *ibid*).

Inclusive education is a goal not only among students but also among the staff in schools which include children with disabilities. Inclusion brings with it recognition; a minority of children is no longer rendered invisible to the majority in the main school system. (Gary and Andrew 2001). An inclusive school is one which is inclusive in every aspect of its ethos, and this is reflected in the way staff treat both the children and each other, and it looks beyond the boundaries of the level of responsiveness of teachers and support staff. (Jenny 2001). Inclusive education goes beyond mainstreaming which is founded on the assumption of two separate school system - a general system and a special system. Also, a restructured inclusive system goes beyond a readiness model which requires that students with SEN prove their readiness to be in an integrated setting, rather than regarding an integrated setting as the norm

(Norah and Tony 2002). Inclusive Education is not another bureaucratic discourse for the surveillance and management of disabled or so called 'special educational needs students' into and out of regular schools (Armstrong, Armstrong and Barton 2000). Inclusion, they argue, is a process in which school, communities, local authorities and government strive to reduce barriers to the participation and learning for all citizens. An educationally inclusive school is one in which the teaching and learning, achievement, attitudes and well being of every young person matters. Effective schools are educationally inclusive schools. This shows, not only in their performance, but also in their ethos of willingness to offer new opportunities to pupils who may have experienced previous difficulties (Peter and Mel 2002). Inclusion is the policy framework. What is at issue is the interpretation and implementation of inclusion in practice. We need to ensure that there is a dual approach focusing on both the rights of children and the effectiveness of their education (Lindsay 2003). Flexibility in the education system would potentially allow a resolution to the dilemma that has been discussed. Starting from the aim of meeting individual needs in relation to a relevant curriculum, schools would be able to devise a flexible approach to grouping which meets both the objectives of inclusion and the effective progress of individual pupils. They would be able to achieve both, because the pursuit of 'inclusion' would no longer be synonymous with joint learning for all pupils in all situations. The overriding principle of valuing individual pupils would ensure that stigma is no longer associated with the varieties of grouping, since that would be applied to all pupils, not just to those labeled as having special needs (Wedell 2005). Inclusion involves a particular emphasis on those groups of learners who may be at risk of marginalisation, exclusion or underachievement. This implies a moral responsibility to ensure that those groups that are statistically most at risk are carefully monitored, and, where necessary, that steps be taken to ensure their presence, participation and achievement in the education system (Ainscow, 2005).

Finally the issue of sustainability in links between mainstream and special school students can be tackled through a structured process of companionship running over the course of a school year. This provides opportunities for students to understand each other better, both inside and outside of school (Gladstone, 2005).

It is a process characterised by diversity, for every aspect of inclusion e.g. definition, motives, aims and levels may show a large diversity in practice. This diversity is also the result of the educational principles under which inclusive policy is being implemented, and therefore varies according to which countries are practicing it.

The term 'inclusion' was used in place of 'integration' in the late 1980s (Thomas and Webb, 1997). Even though the two terms are similar, they are not synonymous. Integration is used to describe the process of placing children with learning difficulties, sensory impairments or physical disabilities into mainstream settings (Thomas and Webb, 1997). Integration emphasizes the 'least restrictive environment' concept which may range from home tuition (full segregation) to full placement in a mainstream class without additional support (partial segregation) to full placement in a mainstream class with additional support (full integration). Integration is focused on the predetermined educational needs of an individual child with SEN, and the focus of the special education is to equip children with the necessary skills to enable them to 'cope' with integration i.e. the process is one of assimilation and does not presuppose any fundamental change in the nature of the school itself (Kunc, 1992). 'Needs' are supported by making available special teaching in mainstream schools. The process of integration is considered to benefit children with SEN by supporting their functional development. Warnock (1978) described three types of integration practice:

- (1) Locational integration. This type of integration requires the establishment of special education classes or units in mainstream schools, or special and mainstream schools sharing the same site.
- (2) Social integration. This form of integration emphasizes the social aspect of locational integration in which mainstream children and children with SEN would interact with each other during lunchtime, play-time, and out of class activities.
- (3) Functional integration. This process of integration requires children with SEN and mainstream children to participate in educational programmes wherever possible.

Inclusion requires the redefining of the term SEN to represent all disadvantaged children rather than just children with learning difficulties and disability. This is because a child's

special needs may arise from a multiplicity of factors related to gender, ethnicity, language, cultural origin or disability. Therefore the concept of inclusion is based on acceptance and belonging, and it is about providing a school setting in which all disadvantaged children can be valued equally, treated with respect, and provided with equal opportunities (Thomas, 1997). The key aspect of inclusion is that all disadvantaged children are able to participate in mainstream school culture and curricula, and that where the child is not capable of accessing the existing school's environment (especially in terms of its curriculum) the environment must be changed i.e. inclusion is accommodating. Ainscow (2003) argued that inclusion should start from the assumption that all children have the right to attend their neighbourhood school i.e. all children have the right to mainstream learning.

Inclusion does not require the preparation of disadvantaged children for mainstream learning. It requires a change in the mainstream schools by the removal of all barriers that hinder the educational opportunities of disadvantaged children. All schools by default should be ready to accept all children so that no one is excluded (Thomas, 1997). Disadvantaged children, especially children with disabilities, should belong in mainstream classes and should be able to achieve meaningful learning there. Therefore, to implement inclusion, it is necessary to overcome barriers, one of which is the belief that only special personnel are equipped and qualified to teach children with SEN. All teachers need to be convinced of their competencies to teach these children. Inclusion is about good teaching for all and not about 'specialised' teaching for children with SEN on the one hand and 'normal' teaching for more able children on the other (Thomas and Webb, 1997).

Proponents of inclusion argue that IE is mutually beneficial to both disadvantaged and mainstream children. Thus inclusion requires a continuous and planned interaction between disadvantaged children and their more able peers, and the freedom for disadvantaged children to associate with all the school's children. Inclusion requires these two sets of children to participate side by side in educational activities within mainstream classes, because it is assumed that inclusion supports interdependence between children. Therefore, inclusion is concerned with values like acceptance, solidarity and socialisation when learning together with disadvantaged children in the mainstream setting (Carro, Gomez and Matia, 1995a).

The distinction between the concepts of 'integration' and 'inclusion' is crucial when we are considering educational change. The present dissertation is concerned with understanding whether educational change can be said to be fostering 'integration' (i.e. placement in mainstream settings with necessary support but without restructuring the mainstream setting to support belonging) or 'inclusion', where 'belonging' is the outcome of the process. This investigation concerns itself with the realities of the Malaysian situation rather than the ideals of academics and the practices of other countries

2.1.3 Rationales of IE

I now proceed to discuss possible rationales of including children with SEN in mainstream schools under three heads: social-ethical, legal-legislative and psychological-educational. This was an approach proposed by Bricher (1979), even though at the time of writing he was not addressisng the concept of inclusive education as such.

The social-ethical rationale views inclusion as giving children with SEN the right to the same opportunities as mainstream children for socializing, developing and achieving, and not being burdened with the stigma of segregated provision and being labeled unnecessarily. Inclusion would allow such children a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum, which would equip them to undertake the transition to adult life (Bayliss, 1995b). Thus, the commitment to include is based on the principle of, and a concern for, equality and parity of treatment for all children. Hence, in this context, inclusion would enable children with SEN to share opportunities for self-fulfilment that are enjoyed by mainstream children in the activities of everyday life, and to participate on equal terms with other mainstream children in the realisation of personal achievement and the hope of being accepted as full members of the school's community. Inclusion also may offer the chance to alter the general public's attitudes towards disabled persons, thus encouraging them to accommodate and welcome people with special needs into their community. The committed proponents of inclusion understandably claim that IE may well provide opportunities to tackle discriminating attitudes, and may help to establish acceptance by communities in an effort to build an inclusive society (Carro,

Gomez and Matia, 1995a). Arguably, it is preferable to include rather than segregate children with SEN so as to educate all children and the general public about the nature of children with SEN. Exposure to these children at the school level should help to dispel social prejudices and misconceptions about persons with disabilities generally and children with SEN in particular. Inclusion is about everyone having opportunities for choice and self-determination. In education, it means listening to and valuing what children have to say, regardless of age or labels (Mittler 2000). This is the goal of inclusion seen in its most favourable aspect, yet it needs to be admitted that many educational administrators are reluctant to commit their departments to a radical resourcing and restructuring of teaching staff and classroom provision without gaining an accurate overview of the established positions and attitudes towards IE of the bulk of their practicing teacher professionals. Hence the focus of my present study into attitudes.

The legal-legislative dimension in the United States was a direct outcome of the civil rights movement in the 1960s (Zigler And Hall, 1986). It resulted in the establishment of the constitutional right to mainstream provision for children with SEN (Public Law 94-14-1975). In England and Wales, the 1981 Education Act established the right of children with SEN to mainstream educational provision. This act recognized:

- (1) the constitutional right of children with SEN to receive free public education, and
- (2) the right of their parents through specific review procedures to request the allocation of appropriate resources for their child.

The psychological-educational rationale of inclusion is to provide children with SEN with a better learning environment because they are exposed to normal play and learning experiences (Yoshida, 1986). Seen from this stance, inclusion is assumed to give children with SEN opportunities to learn socially appropriate behaviour, and thus have a better chance to develop competencies for independent living. By creating a more demanding learning environment, children with SEN should enhance their personal functional development. It is also assumed that inclusion would help to reduce the social distance between these children and their mainstream peers. Hopefully, inclusion would lead to these children being accepted as part of the wider school community, and result in them and mainstream children accepting each other

naturally as part of a homogeneous group, thus eradicating the stigma and social isolation of children with SEN. The psychological-educational rationale of inclusion is well supported by research evidence showing that children with SEN who were placed in segregated special classes did not seem to achieve any better than those who remained in mainstream classes despite the vast amount of resources made available to these special classes (e.g. Thomas and Webb, 1997; 1992; and Yoshida;1986).

There are two types of psychological support that inclusion could provide for children with SEN:

(1) peer support. This is essential not only in the learning process, but also for their social and emotional development within the school culture.

(2) support in the form of a differentiated curriculum, that is, an individualised curriculum in mainstream classes. Differential curricula allow children with SEN to progress through the school curriculum at their own pace, and according to their own ability, which should help to dispel feelings of inferiority.

2.1.4 Changes to support Inclusion

The innovation to include children with SEN involves restructuring and changing an educational system especially one that does not have a history of encouraging such policy. Teachers' capability to deal with such an innovation will be critical for the future development of the programme because they are at the forefront of its implementation. It is these teachers who will make a difference in the lives of children with SEN who are included in their classes. Knoster in his 'Managing Complex Change' (cited by LeRoy and Simpson, 1996), was of the opinion that a combination of vision, skills, incentives, resources and action plans are required for successful restructuring.

a. Vision

Vision is necessary for the success of inclusive innovations. Vision should not be thought of as the sole responsibility of leaders, but a leader's vision is essential to start any innovation.

In the United States and in the United Kingdom, administrators' visions were translated into law, which established the rights of children with SEN to mainstream provision. Vision on the part of Local Education Authorities in the United Kingdom resulted in the establishment of advisory services to guide and support IE in mainstream schools, thus helping to make it a success (Barnett (1989), Golby and Gulliver (1988), Ainscow (2005). At the school level, without school administrator vision, the process of inclusion would be ineffective and could result in confusion when implemented. Inclusion would require mainstream schools to be different and flexible in order to provide all the educational opportunities to their children with SEN (Arcangeli, 1995), since it is not simply the physical integration of children into mainstream classes.

Leader visions of inclusion need to be shared with teachers who are crucial to the implementation of the programme. Fullan (1993:28) believes that:

"...Shared vision which is essential for success must evolve through the dynamic interaction of organizational members and leaders."

Leadership vision of inclusion imposed on teachers might merely command compliance but would not ensure commitment from them. Shared vision of inclusion would ensure true commitment because it would reflect teachers' own personal vision (Senge 1990 cited by Fullan 1993). The 'whole school approach' to inclusion demands shared vision between school administrators, teachers, and other school personnel i.e. the vision of the whole school community to inclusion. Thus efforts must be undertaken by the relevant educational authorities to develop teachers' personal vision of inclusion so that teachers have an explicit understanding of why they need to make the inclusion programme work. As stated by Fullan (1993):

"If there is a cardinal rule of change in the human condition, it is that you cannot make people change. You cannot force them to think differently or compel them to develop new skills."

b. Skills

Having the right skills is crucial for successful change. It is not enough for teachers to be exposed to the idea of inclusion. They also have to know where the idea fits. They must be skilled in their handling of children with SEN and not just like the idea of having these children in their classes. If teachers perceive themselves as lacking in the skills to teach children with SEN, they will be anxious about inclusion innovation. Therefore, the training of teachers prior to and during inclusion implementation should be more than just one-off workshops and disconnected training.

Besides teaching skills, Fullan (1993) cited two other skills that are essential to teachers in order to facilitate change: (1) inquiry skills and (2) collaboration skills. At the initial stage of inclusion implementation, teachers are not experienced with the variety, needs, and goals of the programme to have a clear idea of the purpose of its implementation. Teachers' inquiry skills i.e. ability to question and experiment with various ways of teaching children with SEN, are essential if inclusion is to be successful because there are bound to be mistakes made at the beginning of inclusion implementation.

Ainscow (2005) has usefully defined the value and necessity of collaborative skills because of the likelihood that a single individual has limited ability to influence successful change on his/her own. Teachers need to work with each other as well as with school administrators to ensure the success of the inclusion programme. Collaboration is the key ingredient for the 'whole school approach' to inclusion. Without collaborative skills and relationships teachers are not able to learn from others. Inclusion is concerned with the identification and removal of barriers. Consequently, it involves collecting, collating and evaluating information from a wide variety of sources in order to plan for improvement in policy and practice. It is about using evidence of various kinds to stimulate creativity and problem solving.

c. Incentives

Armstrong and Stephens (2005) state the case for the desirability of incentives as motivating factors towards the achievement of agreed educational objectives. In the case of IE incentives, whether in the form of salary remuneration or promotion, may be considered

necessary in order to overcome resistance to inclusion implementation. Incentives may influence the degree of support which school administrators may be prepared to give to inclusion and may also determine the quality of the educational programme provided for children with SEN within the school. Most importantly they are likely to influence teachers' support for inclusion implementation. Incentives should also be provided for the parents of children with SEN in the form of general support and specific information on the merits of inclusion so as to encourage them to accept their children's move from segregated educational provision to mainstream classes, or to maintain their children in their present mainstream classes.

d. Resources

The development of an integrated and community-based support system aims at building the capacity of all aspects of the system to respond to diverse needs of the learner population. The 'integrated and community-based nature' of this support includes emphasis on the need for collaboration of all key role players involved in providing support to centres of learning, with a special focus on the inclusion and utilization of community resources in defining and providing the support (Lomofsky and Lazarus 2001).

Resource support for both children with SEN and teachers teaching them (Sanchez, 1995) is essential to avoid teachers' frustration. When children with SEN are included in mainstream classes, human and material resources should be made available to help them function effectively, for without the appropriate resources children with SEN would not be able to access the mainstream curriculum. Human resources such as 'specialist' special education teachers and educational psychologists are essential in helping to minimise the learning problems of children with SEN (Sanchez, 1995), and to help guide teachers in their dealing with these children. Wherever necessary, assistant teachers may also be required to help children with SEN in classroom activities. Material support would depend very much on children with SEN impairments, their disabling condition, and the resources currently available in the schools. To cater to the child's disability, demands will be made for increased material support, and this will require schools to reallocate their resources.

Support in the form of favourable staff-pupil ratios for classes that have children with SEN is also essential. This would enable teachers to devote more attention to these children. Favourable staff-pupil ratios could invariably affect the number of places available for children with SEN in mainstream schools. If schools were to accept an unlimited number of these children, the nature of the school could change. This would need to be prevented in order to allay any fears in the general public in that school's catchment area.

Support in the form of a modified version of the school curriculum or differential curriculum is also necessary. This would allow teachers to accommodate children with SEN without affecting the quality of the education of the other more able children.

Modification of the school curriculum would require the restructuring of the existing curriculum and the reorganization of subject content. If the curriculum is too examination oriented and the same syllabus is used for all children, then children with SEN would require a less complicated version of the curriculum.

There are two types of resources that are needed to support IE: (1) Resources to help children with SEN to cope with the mainstream learning challenges, and (2) Resources to support mainstream schools practising IE. This could be costly. As Zigler and Hail (1988:8) put it:

“...we must recognise that...the effective and human integration of handicapped children into mainstream settings is going to be expensive”.

Hence, questions are being raised about the cost benefit of including children with SEN. Without appropriate resources the implementation of inclusion would only lead to frustration for all involved.

e. Action plan

Effective action planning requires the definition of clear priorities (Ofsted report 1995). These include such features as setting specific targets, allocating responsibilities, and establishing costings and procedures for monitoring and evaluation (Pathak and Maychell 1997). Careful planning is required at all levels of inclusion implementation, from the ministerial to the

school level. Action planning would involve strategies for implementation, acquiring relevant learning resources, establishing a training programme and also monitoring the inclusion programme to evaluate its effectiveness. Without such planning inclusion could proceed in a muddled and ineffective way.

Generally, the practice of inclusion will require changes to the school's traditional structures, systems, and practices. Five requirements have been mentioned in order to ensure success. If any one of the five requirements is missing, changes will be difficult to sustain. The process of including children with SEN in mainstream classes will be problematic and the chances of the success of inclusion innovation will be bleak.

It needs to be said that while none of the research findings referred to here have inevitable and direct relevance to future development in Malaysia, their concepts will undoubtedly inform Malaysian policy makers. I therefore keep the foregoing analysis in mind when turning to the Malaysian picture and considering the range of possible changes that are likely to support inclusion.

2.2 Inclusive Education - Malaysian perspective

Historically, Malaysia has developed a framework of describing 'needs' which are based on a child's intellectual cognitive developments. Traditionally, special educational needs are defined for deaf or blind children, whereas children with physical impairments who attend mainstream schools and are capable of following an unmodified curriculum are not seen as having 'special needs'. Since these children are considered to be intellectually 'normal' they are educated in mainstream classes. Children with physical impairments who require special facilities to move freely within the schools are not registered with the Ministry of Education. Diversity of mother tongue is also not used a criterion in defining 'SEN', especially at the primary level of education because primary schools in Malaysia offer three different types of instruction in different mother tongues (seen section 1.2), and parents are able to send their children to primary schools whose medium of instruction is the child's home language.

Children with learning difficulties who attend primary schools are divided into two groups: (1) those requiring remedial education and (2) those with LD who require modification of the curriculum or modified access to the national curriculum (see section 1.3.3).

Malaysian school children are considered to have problems if they are unable to cope with the mainstream school challenges and the nationwide curriculum. The general consensus in Malaysian educational circles is that it is because of ‘within-child’ impairments that children are unable to function successfully in mainstream classes. The school environment has not customarily been considered as a possible cause of a child’s learning problems, even though the Ministry does acknowledge that ‘within-school’ factors may cause a child to have remedial needs. However, such remedial needs were excluded from the Ministry’s special education programme. The assumption was that children with remedial needs do not need a particularly specialised educational provision compared to children with sensory and intellectual impairments.

The Ministry views ‘SEN’ from a ‘medical’ perspective. This is not surprising since a child will only be recognised officially as having special needs after being certified by the medical professionals. The Ministry’s special education policies (see section 1.4) clearly show that it is currently adopting an assimilationist approach to special education i.e. the process of intervention is directed at supporting the child to cope with mainstream education, without considering any structural changes which may be necessary to accommodate the child within mainstream schools.

2.2.1 Educational placement of children with SEN

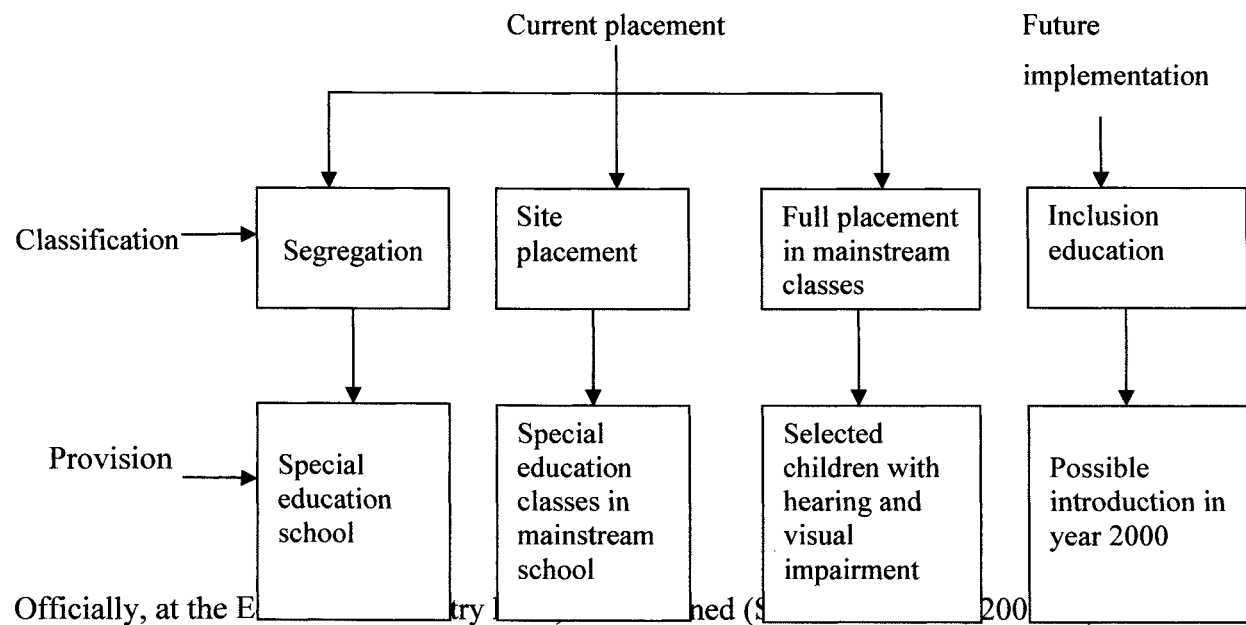
Educational placement of children with SEN in Malaysia is made according to the ‘least restrictive environment’ principle. The general perception among Malaysian educationists is that children under the Ministry’s special educational programme are unable to interact with the mainstream learning environment because of their impairments, and thus a different approach to teaching these children should be made. The belief is that specialised educational provision should be made available either in schools or by SECs in mainstream schools, which would

provide a secure learning environment for such children. The specialised education offered by the special schools or SECs would be able to fulfil the children's practical needs, especially in everyday life skills activities. The Ministry now believes that children with SEN are inappropriately segregated and excluded from many of the educational opportunities and experiences that could be gained in mainstream classes.

Despite the Ministry's adoption of a gradual approach to change based on the concept of 'least restrictive environment', it has to be acknowledged that the following factors: the lack of specialised SEN resources, the perceived inability of RMCTs to teach children with very specific needs, the availability of special schools: all act as 'barriers' to the process of IE. Fig.7 presents an overview of the 'least restrictive environment' process adopted in Malaysia.

The placement of children with SEN is also subject to SETs' decisions on whether a child with SEN should be educated within the special educational provision provided by the Ministry, especially children with LD or those provided by the Ministry of National Unity and Social Development. Once the medical profession has diagnosed a child to have LD (see section 1.3.2), and recommends special education, the child should be admitted to a SEC after satisfying all the required conditions (**see section 1.3.3**). If the SETs concerned feel they cannot cope with a child's disruptive behaviour or if the SETs feel that the child is not making significant educational and developmental progress, they may recommend that the child be educated within the Ministry of National Unity and Social Development's special education programme. Usually the State Education Department's special education officer (**see section 2.1.2**) would endorse the recommendation made and transfer the child, after discussion with the child's parents.

Fig 7: Model of least restrictive framework in Malaysian schools



“.... the process of educating children and young people with SEN in settings where they have maximum association, consistent with their interests, with other children and young people of the same age”.

It is difficult to interpret the Ministry’s concept of IE because its published statement about this is lacking in operational details. General policy statements have been made by the Ministry, but details are only now being developed.

Operational IE is being interpreted as the process of placing children with SEN under the Ministry’s special education programme in mainstream classes. How these children will be placed in mainstream classes is still to be announced. If the ministry intends to place children with SEN in mainstream classes, part-time or full time, within the present mainstream school organization, then IE in Malaysia will conform more to the international concept of *integration*. If the placement involves changing the school’s practice to the child’s needs, than Malaysia will be following international practice by implementing ‘*inclusion*’.

2.2.2 Malaysian rationale for introducing IE into mainstream schooling

The ‘caring society’ (see section 1.4) policy is intended not only to support the continuation of the traditional values of family members supporting each other, but also to support the inclusion of persons with disabilities into Malaysian mainstream society and community networks, so that they can contribute to the nation’s development. Schools are part of the wider society, so they are expected to play an important role in preparing children with SEN for integration into mainstream adulthood society. The Schools’ Division (2003b:2) of the Ministry of Education acknowledged this in its support for the introduction of IE into mainstream school. It states:

“.... That the success of inclusive education depends upon it being viewed as part of a system which extends from the classroom to the broader society.”

The education authorities planning IE believe that children with SEN can best learn and apply important skills to function in mainstream society when placed in the mainstream learning environment, the assumption being that they could apply these skills in normal social contexts.

IE could encourage the development of mutually reciprocated positive attitudes between children with SEN and mainstream children. For this to happen, efforts are needed in Malaysia to impress upon RMCTs that children with SEN have the potential to succeed in mainstream classes if they are given adequate and appropriate support. Academic development should progress according to the child’s capabilities and potential. All children with SEN in Malaysia are allowed two extra years (see section 1.3.2) of primary schooling before taking the national UPSR examination.

Currently, the Ministry acknowledges the entitlement of children with SEN to be educated in mainstream classes, though surprisingly and regrettably it is not legally required to provide the specialised support if it happens to be unavailable. When IE is officially introduced in mainstream schools, the issues will not be whether to include children with SEN, but how to

include them to their advantage, both in the medium term with respect to their schooling, and in the long term, with respect to their preparation for adult life.

Malaysia subscribes to general goals of including children with SEN in mainstream classes (see section 2.1.4). IE in Malaysia is regarded as a transitional educational programme for these children to prepare them for the work culture. Making them employable is the main priority in all special educational programmes (see section 1.5), which is an aspect of educational philosophy that has yet to be subjected to official scrutiny.

Thus, the aims of introducing IE into mainstream school are:

- i. to enable children with SEN to learn accepted social norms from their mainstream peers. Mainstream children would act as role models for children with SEN in learning appropriate social behaviours and acquiring new social skills.
- ii. to encourage children with SEN and mainstream children to accept each other within the school environment in particular and within society in general. This would hopefully promote the participation of children with SEN in local activities and help to ease their access into mainstream society.
- iii. to enable both sets of children to share the same resources available in mainstream schools, and thus encourage two-way learning, mainstream to special and special to mainstream, the able and disabled learning from each other.

(Kamariah, 2002 a:10-12)

2.2.3 Educational constraint in Malaysian primary schools affecting the introduction of IE

The Ministry of Education is currently concentrating its effort on mainstream primary schools, since education for children with SEN at this level of schooling is completely segregated from mainstream learning. (This is not so at the secondary level – see (Section 2.2.4). The majority of children with SEN under the Ministry's special education programmer are currently in primary schools or SECs.

Malaysia acknowledges the difficulties of transferring the education of children with SEN from current established special placements to mainstream settings, and the Education Ministry has conceded that steps need to be undertaken to prepare the groundwork for the introduction of IE fully into Malaysian mainstream primary schools (Wan Kalthom, 2001). If the concept of IE were to be translated into practice in Malaysia, mainstream classroom environments would have to be made increasingly receptive to children with SEN. There are several issues prevalent at the primary level of education that could seriously and adversely affect IE implementation in schools. For each of these issues action by the relevant educational body is needed to overcome the associated problem so as to minimise its negative effect on IE.

The first issue that needs to be addressed is the method by which mainstream primary schools are being evaluated by the Ministry of Education. The Malaysian public attaches great importance to children's academic excellence. Children who do well in public examinations are held in high esteem. They have an excellent opportunity to be selected to pursue secondary education in prestigious and reputable schools, and the criteria for selection into these schools are grades achieved in Bahasa Malaysia, Mathematics, and English examined in the UPSR (see section 1.3.2).

Mainstream primary schools are given a yearly ranking by the State Education Department based on the UPSR attainments of the school's pupils at primary 6 level. The higher the percentage of passes, the higher the ranking of the school. A school with a sharp drop in the percentage of UPSR passes compared with the previous year, or one low in the ranking list, would be regularly visited by the officers of the State Education Department and District Education offices, as well as by the Federated School Inspectorate, and evaluation would be made of that school's RMCTs teaching strategies and its plan to improve its primary 6 pupils' achievements at the next UPSR examination.

The pressure to produce primary 6 pupils with good examination results renders it necessary for RMCTs to employ teaching strategies that are geared to producing such results. RMCTs tend not to give due attention to low achieving children as they feel these children would not be able to pass the crucial UPSR examination. The most important negative effect of over-

emphasizing academic excellence to maintain a school's good reputation is the stifling of the RMCT's flexibility and creativity in their teaching strategies.

Another consequence of school evaluations based on UPSR results is the willingness of school headteachers to sacrifice the educational needs of the school's low achieving children in favour of high achievers. The Federal School Inspectorate's Report (2003) states that a number of mainstream primary school headteachers allocated the worst classrooms in the school in terms of location and learning environment to be converted into remedial education classes. It was also reported that mainstream primary schools tended to allocate substandard furniture to these classes compared to mainstream classes. The Report also stated that it is common practice for headteachers to replace absent RMCTs with RETs and this resulted in the school's remedial education programme being closed.

The second issue is RMCTs' knowledge of the educational needs of children with SEN. Earlier qualified teachers had no special education component in their training. The introduction of KBSR with its emphasis on remedial education in mainstream class teaching resulted in a component of remedial work being incorporated into the teacher trainees' curriculum. As a preparation for the planned introduction of IE in the year 2010, BPG has introduced in 2003 some element of IE theory into the in-service course of trainee teachers.

Generally, the majority of RMCTs do not get knowledge from formal training about the education of children with SEN. The exclusiveness of the present Malaysian special education programme has resulted in the non-involvement of RMCTs in the formal education of these children, even in mainstream primary schools with SECs. The effect of this non-involvement is that RMCTs trend to regard educating children with SEN as the sole responsibility of SETs (Kamariah, 2002a). RMCTs who have SECs in the school vicinity acquire experiential knowledge of special education only as the result of social contact and interaction with these children within the school's compound. This contact could also be the result of a special school being an immediate neighbour to mainstream primary schools.

Qualified primary teachers in Malaysia who choose to develop their skills with children with SEN must take the one-year INSET course (inservice training in special education) organized by the Ministry of Education's special programme which gives them experience of the needs of the four categories of SEN. Their one-year full time course at MPIK has been recognised for all specialist teaching in their field (see section 1.7).

The majority of teachers involved in the teaching of children with LD in mainstream primary school SECs are those who have undergone one year in-service courses in remedial education. Mainstream primary schools with SECs for children with LD but without specialist SETs or RETs would tend to select primary 1 RMCTs as its SETs. The primary 1 RMCTs would also be the most likely recruits if the number of teachers needed to teach children with LD in SECs is inadequate. For these selected RMCTs several weekend in-service courses in education of children with LD would be organized by the State Education Department's special education officer.

The third issue is the non-existence of local educational psychologists in the special education programme of the Ministry of Education. This is because there are no specialist posts in educational psychology within the Ministry. Hence it is difficult for SETs to obtain expert advice if they have difficulties in dealing with the learning problems of children with SENs.

The fourth issue is the RMCTs' workload. It is common practice in Malaysia for RMCTs to produce in writing their annual, semester, weekly and daily written lesson plans for each subject they teach. All teachers (irrespective of their professional status) are required to outline their daily lesson plans clearly in their teaching record book. In line with the requirement of KBSR, RMCTs' daily lesson plans should also include remedial education activities for low achieving children and enrichment activities for high achieving children. These record books are handed to headteachers on the last day of the school's week. These record books are checked, authorised by the headteacher, and returned to teachers on the first day of the next week.

Besides filling in records books, RMCTs are also expected to prepare appropriate teaching aids, mark pupils' work (teachers normally give daily homework to children).

Prepare and mark examination/test papers. The latter are for both school and national level. At the school level (usually three times a year) each individual child's school based performance is recorded in a personal record book. These record books are given to parents via the child, and the parent is required to sign the record book and sent it back to the school. At the national level many RMCTs are nominated to mark UPSR examination papers. They are also expected to attend school meetings, in-service trainings and other activities organized by the education authorities throughout the academic year.

Teachers are also given school administrative responsibilities such as organizing text book loans to needy children. They may also be put in charge of student welfare, disciplinary matters, clubs, sports, or co-curriculum activities, whether at school, district, state or national levels.

Added to these responsibilities is the requirement for every RMCT to finish teaching the yearly syllabus of each individual subject at the end of each school academic year. The pressure to finish the syllabus by the appropriate time is more intense for RMCTs teaching phase 2 primary children, due to the UPSR examination. Frequently, time constraints result in RMCTs not being able to reinforce adequately children's understanding of concepts being taught. This adversely affects the less able child.

The fifth issue is size of class. Presently there are inadequate numbers of classrooms to cater for all the primary school aged children, especially in urban areas. To accommodate all the children, mainstream primary schools in Malaysia practise two daily parallel and discrete school sessions, morning and afternoon.

Due to the inadequate number of classrooms in the schools, on average the number of children per primary class is between 35 to 45. In urban areas, it can be as many as 50. With this size of class, RMCTs often complain of their inability to give adequate attention to individual children.

The sixth issue is providing the appropriate physical facilities and learning resources for children with SEN. Most mainstream primary schools do not have appropriate physical facilities for children with visual or physical impairment. Only mainstream primary schools with SECs located in their vicinity are expected to have suitable facilities and resources for children with SEN. Facilities and resources available in such schools depend on the types of children with SEN that these SECs cater for. It is also not uncommon for mainstream primary schools with SECs not to be equipped with the appropriate physical facilities and learning resources necessary to support children with SEN. The Report by the Federal School Inspectorate (2003a) noted that in a number of mainstream primary schools, children with visual impairment were not provided with special pathways (with railings) to the toilets, and also that these children had to share the same toilet facilities with other children. As for mainstream primary schools without SECs, it is reasonable to assume that they had none of the physical facilities and learning resources required to cater for the education of various types of children with SEN.

2.2.4 Summary

Malaysia's state educational system may be viewed from outside the country as having made relatively slow progress in developing provision for children with special educational needs, and what changes have evolved have been based largely on medically determined decisions about the physical nature of sensory and intellectual impairments, with little attention being given to the ethos of Malaysian school life and to pedagogic practice within the country as a whole. Malaysian state primary school provision has not regularly been viewed as the appropriate channel for answering the special educational needs of children who are perceived to have significant delays or disorders in their cognitive or sensory development. Consequently the majority of mainstream primary schools, and even those few schools offering some degree of special educational provision, do not themselves at present have any direct involvement, responsibility or flexibility in selecting the children who might be suitable for their care and management.

Although the Ministry of Education is on record as being committed in principle to introducing within three years a significant revision of educational services to children with special educational needs which promises to fall within the rubric of inclusive education, no official guidelines have as yet been circulated to the teaching body at large. It is therefore not possible at present for the country's teachers to prepare themselves for such a major development other than by seeking information about the nature of inclusive practice as it is evolving in other countries. At the time of writing Malaysia's official interpretation of the term inclusive education still lies within the future.

It will be argued that the very term inclusive education is itself vague and imprecise, and therefore open to manipulation. The objection may fairly be raised that for practical administrative convenience various degrees or levels of mere integration may be offered or proposed as being inclusion per se. It is also conceivable that at the administrative level inclusion may be operationally defined in such a way that many of the hardest to place children will never be considered for inclusion in mainstream settings. Such an outcome, if it were to take place, would not in my judgement be in the interests of inclusive practice as a national goal, nor would it be in keeping with the development of IE internationally. But whatever policy decisions are implemented, and whatever level of general acceptance is given by the teaching force to the forthcoming innovation, many testing changes will need to be made to the current primary school system if disabled children and their carers are to find their rightful place in Malaysian education and in Malaysian society.

Of the five requirements that need to be in place to support IE as advocated by Knoster, 1996 (see section 2.1.4), only one has so far been partially fulfilled in Malaysia, that is, Ministerial vision. A statement of vision for the establishment of a 'caring' society has received official recognition and has been duly incorporated into the Ministry of Education's statement of intention for the establishment of IE in 2010. But in sharp contradiction to educational legislation in the United States and in the United Kingdom, it has not been translated into law in Malaysia, nor even promulgated in any clear detail. Whether this vision is capable of being shared by RMCTs at the school level has yet to be determined. Reports however are circulating that action planning for the introduction of IE is under way in the BPK (Special

Education Division). This would constitute a second element in Knoster's list of requirements. But again, details are awaited.

This leaves the other three major requisites in Knoster's list of issues influencing the outcome of IE innovation: skills, resources and incentives. For each issue, effective action is needed to overcome the barriers which are associated with it. However for the purpose of this dissertation, principal attention will be paid to the issue of skills, and in particular to mainstream teachers' perception of the suitability of their skills if and when an inclusive programme is implemented. It is now appropriate to restate my key research questions:

- 1 What is the understanding of Malaysian regular mainstream class teachers (RMCTs) regarding inclusive education?
- 2 What knowledge do RMCTs have about the Ministry of Education's plans for inclusive education?
- 3 What are the general attitudes of RMCTs towards the intended implementation of inclusive education?
- 4 How do the teaching backgrounds of RMCTs influence their general attitudes towards inclusive education?
- 5 How do the perceptions of RMCTs regarding their ability to teach children with special educational needs relate to their willingness to support the implementation of education implementation?
- 6 What extra resources and supports do RMCTs consider they would need in the event of the implementation of inclusive education?

These questions have clear implications for the way the present investigation is carried out, and this will be discussed in the methodological chapter.

At this juncture it may be appropriate for myself as author of this investigation to make brief allusion to my personal understanding of the IE debate at this time when Malaysia's primary

teaching force has for the most part only a general sense of some of the arguments for and against. It is generally appreciated that IE in essence fosters the hope that schools and educational systems may be capable of the kind of systemic change that will yield more caring and supportive educational communities where the needs of all students and teachers can be truly met. Yet whether the idealism that lies at the heart of IE is going to yield more benefits than disadvantages is seen as an issue which is incapable of resolution at the present time. The theoretical advantages are generally understood: that IE children will see and experience different teaching styles and methods used for different pupils, and from these may learn a wider range of socialisation skills and be in a better position to communicate and interact and to instruct each other, both in the school and the wider community; and furthermore that students themselves will develop a critical understanding of special educational needs. Likewise the theoretical disadvantages are generally appreciated: that placing together children with a wide range of ability levels may slow the progress of those of average ability and above; that IE is not a cost effective policy and will place excessive demands on teaching skills; and that an organized special education provision, whether in special classes or in special schools better provides individualised instruction to meet individual needs.

This is a debate which is being entered into across the continents of the world and which serves the purpose of stimulating many practising teachers to give considered thought to the philosophies and the economic and working conditions of colleagues in very different countries, under very different types of governmental control. From my own perspective, the international IE movement, despite its proud ambitions and the admirable motives of its leading advocates, has not yet achieved the undeniable level of success that would facilitate its ready acceptance in countries which do not have a long tradition of educational innovation and experimentation, among which Malaysia must be considered to be one. Doubtless Malaysia will face the same or similar theoretical problems as elsewhere in defining its rationale for inclusive innovation and will experience the same or similar practical problems as elsewhere in launching its implementation. My own current preoccupation in this debate concerns the powerful impact which inclusion will undoubtedly have upon the present primary teaching force. I am especially aware that RMCT attitudes toward IE innovation are

crucial for the success of any IE programme, and this is confirmed by the studies of many experts whose work will be reviewed in chapter three. If RMCTs have positive attitudes towards the implementation of IE then the factors underlying the above issues may be more amenable to change, which would support the move towards IE generally. Hence a clearer understanding of these attitudes is essential. The next chapter will discuss the definition of attitudes, their development, models and types of attitude measurement, and how these may be related to the concept of IE.

This chapter deals with the construction of a general model of RMCT attitudes towards children with SEN and towards the likelihood of their having to teach SEN children (i.e. those with learning difficulties, visual impairment and hearing impairment) in the event of the Malaysian Ministry of Education's IE policy being implemented. It is therefore useful to spend some time looking at how attitudes are formed in general, and how complex they may be. If IE is to succeed, the Ministry must find a way to encourage RMCTs to accept IE in good faith because they are central to the innovation and not merely receivers of a predetermined model.

3.1 Definition of attitudes

An attitude can be described as a mental process which determines both the actual and potential responses of an individual in the social world (Allport, 1973). Actual and potential responses are usually directed towards some entity. Allport (1973: 23) described an attitude as: *"...a state of mind of the individual towards a value."*

The entity towards which an individual holds an attitude is called an attitude object. Attitude objects can be something that is discriminable or an object of thought (Jonas, Eagly, and Stroebe, 1995) such as the self, people, concrete objects, or abstract entities like social policies and ideologies.

"...a mental and neutral state of readiness organized through experience, exerting a directive and dynamic influence upon the individual's responses to all objects and the situation with which it is related"

(Allport, 1973:24)

Jonas, Eagly and Stroebe (1995:2) defined attitude as: *"...any psychological tendency to evaluate a particular entity with some degree of flavour of disfavour"*; while Smith and Mackie (1995:266)

described attitude as: “....any cognitive representation that summarises our evaluation of an attitude towards an object”.

A person's attitude towards an attitude object can be either positive, neutral or negative and can vary in intensity. This intensity normally reflects the person's evaluation of the object as being weak or strong. As the person's evaluation of the object becomes more salient, and the person more involved, his/her rejection or acceptance of it increases, and his/her indifference towards it decreases. This dissertation is concerned with teachers' attitudes towards the issue of children with SEN and the IE policy.

It is relevant at this point to acknowledge that the emphasis on attitudes held by teachers towards educational change which this study presents can be open to challenge from those who have an investment in the sociology of childhood rather than in the sociology of educational planning. This is a standpoint which seeks to understand children, their needs and their attitudes from the point of view of children themselves, and it challenges the presumption that adult professionals are uniquely qualified to offer the most valid account of learning needs. Children too are social actors in and upon the learning world in which they are placed. James and Prout (1997) advance an argument for a social construction of childhood. ‘Children's social relationships and cultures are worthy of study in their own right..... Children are and must be seen as active in the construction and determination of their own social lives, the lives of those around them and the societies in which they live’. This ‘social constructionist’ emphasis reflects recent evidence that even young children can be competent and accurate reporters of their own direct experiences and for that reason their voices need to be heard when their needs and requirements are under consideration (Christensen and James 2000). There are examples of initiatives that show the positive impact of ascertaining and including the views of children and young people with disabilities in addition to the perception and attitudes of adults towards disabled children in the process of educational decision making (Jones 2005).

However in order to do justice to the constructionist standpoint it must further be acknowledged that any attempt to examine the attitudes held by teachers towards their pupils

in the classroom is to study a complex set of thinking behaviours that are themselves the result of appreciably more complex social and personal factors. Social constructionism is a sociological theory of knowledge with its origins in the early nineteenth century writings of Hegel, later developed by Durkheim, that aims to uncover ways in which individuals and groups play their parts in creating their own perceived reality. This approach holds that even basic, so called common sense views of the world are significantly derived not so much from individual experience but from social interactions. From this standpoint reality is viewed as a social construct. Any particular social construct, one example of which could be a specific attitude, may be quite obviously true to those who accept it, but in fact is an invention or artifact having its origin in a particular social culture. When applied to the field of education, social constructionism provides a view of learning as something which the learner needs to create, or construct, for himself, rather than just receiving it from a source (whether a teacher, a book or a fount of authority). The learner does his/her learning work chiefly by being part of a learning community, and normally it is through conversation and interchange of ideas that knowledge about the process of understanding gets constructed (Burr 2003).

Although the philosophical concept of social constructionism was not widely promulgated until the latter decades of the last century, it can be argued that many educational pioneers, especially in the field of sensory impairment and learning difficulties as well as in progressive education, had developed teaching techniques and forms of classroom organization and group learning which conformed inherently with the constructionist principle of learning as being essentially a social process. Such teaching for children with special educational needs has therefore tended to focus on experiences and contexts that are already familiar to the child as a starting point so as to encourage willingness and ability to learn in a group setting and also to structure material in such a way that it can be easily grasped. Furthermore materials are presented in such a way that learning is likely to be active rather than passive, but on the understanding and expectation that material instructed will be received and reacted to in different ways by different learners. Many of these principles have found their way up through primary school settings into both secondary and tertiary forms of education and training, with the result that constructionism in some form represents a major current influence, having impact on how teachers learn to teach, with much emphasis being placed

on students' personal experience of and reaction to the subject matter taught rather than on the content of the subject matter itself.

It follows from this approach that every society forges its own learning culture and its own social constructs according to a very wide range of theoretical and practical influences and constraints operating in a particular country at a particular period in its evolution. The range of attitudes held by teachers towards their pupils may be very wide if staff have a great diversity of social and academic backgrounds themselves; alternatively a relative uniformity of social background and training may result in some stereotypy of attitude and practice. Both circumstances have their merits and demerits in institutional settings, and administrators need to be aware of the group culture and group values of any professional team especially when innovation imposed from above is contemplated. Hence the need for accurate assessment of prevalent attitudes before change is introduced. From the social construct standpoint radical change must be skilfully introduced and carefully monitored. There can be great value in bringing together for training purposes personnel of markedly different values, standpoints and judgements, and even different teaching cultures. What at first appear to be quite diverse ways of seeing and thinking about the world, from no common standpoint, may on occasion be developed into worthwhile collaborative coalitions, as Bouwen (2001) claims. Bakhtin (1981) has also advocated the goal of creative dialogue through the active involvement of those with diametrically opposed viewpoints. It is this which makes it possible for people of fundamentally diverse attitudes to move beyond, or perhaps more accurately retreat from, ways of being and acting in the world which they each thought to be basic to themselves and unchangeable (Shotter 2006).

All this being said, it was not feasible within the scope of the present study to attempt the kind of broad spectrum examination of educational attitudes that constructionist analysis would require i.e. involving all elements in a learning community, teachers and learners alike. Hence a relatively restricted and carefully defined investigation of primary teacher attitudes has been attempted here.

3.2 Attitude Development

An individual develops attitudes in the process of interacting with the attitude object. A person's attitude will determine what the person will hear, think, and do about the object (Allport, 1973).

Attitudes develop from three sources according to various researchers (Franzoi, 1996, Smith and Mackie, 1995, and Jonas, Eagly and Stroebe, 1995):

- (1) beliefs about the object's positive or negative characteristics
- (2) feelings and emotions towards it
- (3) past and current behaviours towards it (see Fig 8).

Attitudes enable an individual to:

- (1) make sense of the social environment and
- (2) forge connections with other persons (Smith and Mackie, 1995).

Attitudes assist a person to master the environment through their object appraisal function, also known as knowledge function (Smith and Mackie, 1995). This function of attitudes enables a person to focus on the important characteristics of the attitude object so that it can be dealt with meaningfully. Attitudes allow a person to classify new information and accommodate it along with established, existing information so that the complex world can be simplified (Stahlberg and Frey 1992).

Attitudes enable a person to forge links with others, or in other words to gain and maintain connectedness with others. This social identity function may also be known as value-expressive function (Smith and Mackie 1995). Attitudes serve the purpose of

- (1) protecting individuals from negative feelings towards themselves or their own groups
 - (2) enabling them to voice values or convictions when standing up to certain issues concerning the attitude object (Stahlberg and Frey 1992).
- These two functions of attitudes do not necessarily exist separately from each other.

3.3 Model of attitudes

Two models of attitudes that are generally accepted within social psychology are reviewed here: (1) the single component model and (2) the three-component model.

3.3.1 Single component model of attitude

This particular model of attitudes is unidimensional because it focuses on one component in which evaluation is central. Attitudes for this model refer to a person's emotions or affects towards an attitude object i.e. his/her positive evaluation of it (Franzoi, 1996). According to this model a person's attitudes can be represented by a single affective response to the attitude object.

3.3.2 The three-component model

According to this model, attitudes consist of three components (Franzoi, 1996, Smith and Mackie, 1995; Jonas, Eagle and Stroebe, 1995; Stahlberg and Frey 1992; and Triandis, Adamopoulous and Brinberg (1986). The three components are cognitive, affective, and conative.

a. Cognitive

Cognitive information is what a person knows intellectually about an attitude object, i.e. the facts. The cognitive aspect of attitude formation assumes that it is largely our knowledge and understanding that shape our attitudes. These are described by Stahlberg and Frey (1992:143) as: "*....opinions held about the attitude object or (...) information, knowledge or thoughts someone has about the attitude object*".

A belief is a perceived link between an attitude object and the attribute associated with it, which tends to shape an individual's concept of the attitude object. A belief formed by personal experience of an attitude object influences an individual's judgment, since it tends to be highly accessible, that is, it is frequently thought about and comes quickly to mind..

Besides experience, acquiring more information of a perceptually salient nature about an attitude object can also influence a person's beliefs and exert a strong effect on judgment. Hence, individuals are likely to hold positive attitudes towards objects they think may have good attributes and negative attitudes towards objects they think may have bad attributes.

A belief about a category of people is often called a stereotype. A stereotype is a belief that members of a particular group of people have certain common traits or attributes. The Ministry will need to have a sound knowledge of RMCTs' stereotypes based on what others tell them because these can be inaccurate.

b. Affective

Affective information consists of how an individual feels about the attitude object, and involves the feelings, moods, emotions or sympathetic nervous system activity that is aroused in a person in relation to the attitude. Attitudes therefore are the positive or negative evaluations a person gives to an attitude object, and this evaluation has degrees of intensity attached to it.

The emotion attached to the attitude object may not necessarily be closely related to cognitive understanding. The mere increase of exposure to a particular attitude object may lead to the development of a more positive attitude to that object. This phenomenon, which is called the 'mere exposure effect', does not require the development of any beliefs, nor does it assume any underlying motive that shapes the attitude (Franzoi, 1996). Hence, people may form an attitude based on an affective response rather than a belief about that object. This raises the question: will exposing RMCTs to children with SEN have the effect of altering their feelings towards IE?

c. Conative

Conative information gained through personal experiences is one of the important bases of attitude development, since it is held that it is our behavioural response to the attitude object that helps to shape our attitude, involving as it does intentions to behave that are not

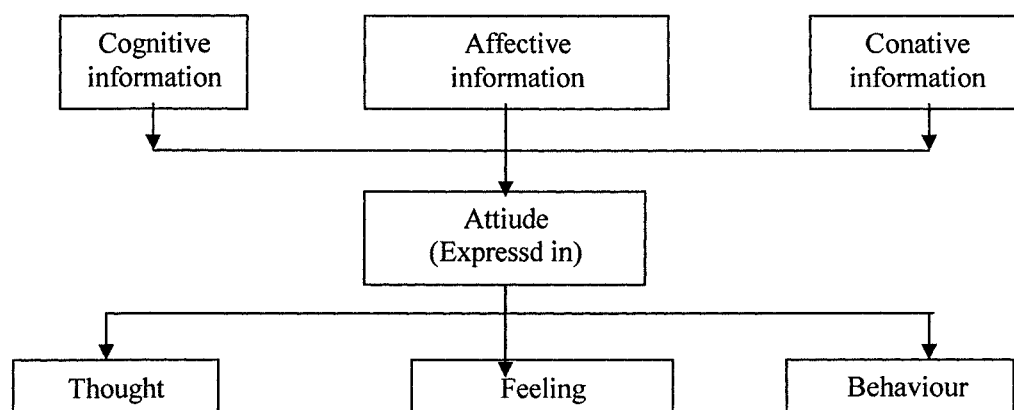
necessarily expressed in action (Jonas, Eagly and Stroebe 1995). Such conative intentions were described by Stahlberg and Frey (1992; 143-144) as:

“....some sort of predisposition to a certain kind of attitude-relevant action i.e. the readiness to behave towards a certain attitude object in a special way...”

Therefore, if attitudes influence overt behaviour, an individual with positive attitude to an object should engage in behaviour that moves towards the attitude object. Those with negative attitude should move away from it.

Diagrammatically these three components of attitude are shown in Fig 8 from Smith and Mackie (1995; 217):

Fig 8 Relationship between attitude and three-components model.



This three-component model of attitudes is appealing. However not all of the three components need to be in place before an attitude towards an object is formed. According to Franzoi (1996), attitudes can consist of only one of these three components. Because of this, a person tends to develop mixed beliefs and feelings towards an attitude object as, for example, cognitive information will sometimes play a major role in determining what is important. In other instances, especially in an emotion-arousing situation, affective information may be a key factor, while in yet another particular situation information on past behaviour might dominate a person's attitudes. It is also not uncommon for one component more than another to be predominant in a given attitude. For example, a certain attitude could

have a negligible behavioural component; that is, a person could have positive or negative feelings and beliefs about something, without having any intention or expectation of doing anything about it.

Ideally, if there is positive cognitive, affective and conative disposition towards the attitude object, the person usually holds a positive attitude about it. Similarly the presence of negative belief, affective and conative disposition tends to produce negative attitudes. Attitudes are also subject to change. As new information with regards to the three components is experienced, a person's attitudes could be partially modified according to the relevance of the new information. Common sense would lead to the hypothesis that in Malaysia's large RMCT population, a range of complexities will characterize attitudes in most areas, and not least in IE.

3.3.3. Empirical support for the two models of attitude

Stahlberg and Frey (1992) in their review of the relevant literature found that empirical evidence in support of either model of attitudes to be contradictory and inconclusive. The three-component model claims that the three components of attitudes should be moderately correlated, thus appearing separate but not completely unrelated. However they found that studies on the relationship between the three components of attitudes had not produced the expected results (Hormuth, 1979; McGuire, 1969, 1985 all cited by Stahlberg and Frey). The three components were found to be too highly correlated to be conceptually different. However Kothandapani (1971) cited by Stahlberg and Frey in supporting the three-component model showed that the three attitude components correlated highly with each other, but each single component correlated less with the other two pairs. Schlegel and Ditecco (1982) also cited by Stahlberg and Frey, showed that attitudes can be represented by a single affective response if relevant beliefs about an attitude object are simple, their number is small, and they do not contradict each other. But if the beliefs are numerous, complicated and partially contradictory, a simple evaluative response to an attitude object will not fully represent the whole attitude structure of a person.

From research findings, Chaiken and Stanger (1987), cited by Stahlberg and Frey, concluded that a definitive judgement of the three- versus one-dimensional issue of attitude is premature at the moment.

3.4 Measurement of attitude

A person's attitudes towards an attitude object is very difficult to measure because of its abstract nature, and thus it cannot be measured directly (Smith and Mackie, 1995; Stahlberg and Frey, 1992; and Lindgren, 1973). Most attitude measurements are based on the assumption that a person's attitude can be measured by his/her opinions or beliefs about the attitude object (Stahlberg and Frey, 1992). Thus a person's attitudes can be inferred from his/her evaluative statements and other expressions about the attitude object (Lindgren, 1973). Measuring a person's attitudes involves two key factors: (1) the direction of his/her attitudes towards the attitude object i.e. for or against it, and (2) the intensity of his/her attitudes towards it i.e. strong, neutral or weak.

Two ways to measure attitudes, (Smith and Mackie, 1995, Stahlberg and Frey, 1992; and Lindgren, 1973) are either by asking the persons directly about their evaluation concerning the attitude object, or by observing their overt behaviours towards it. This second form of indirect measurement usually involves the measurement of people's attitudes without their being aware that attitudes are being measured.

3.4.1. Measurements of attitudes by direct questioning

This type of attitude measurement requires asking the persons to give their judgement of the attitude object. This can be done verbally or in writing. Verbal judgement can be undertaken by interviewing the person on their attitude about the attitude object. The advantage of the interview technique is that it enables the interviewer, if necessary, to probe the interviewee to gain deeper understandings of his attitudes.

Written measurement of attitudes usually employs paper-and-pencil techniques. It normally requires the usage of attitude scales. Paper-and-pencil techniques allow the collection of a great deal of information in a short time, and because attitudes scales can be defined and elaborated to a high degree, they are very popular among researchers. Also results obtained using paper-and-pencil techniques have the added advantage of being easier to analyse statistically (Lindgren, 1973).

3.4.2 Attitude scales

There are several ways of developing attitude scales to measure attitudes. Attitude scales are used to measure both the direction and the intensity of a person's views about the attitude object. The scales normally consist of a series of questions asking the respondent how strongly he/she agrees or disagrees in his/her evaluation of the attitude object. Respondents choose from options that range from an extreme negative evaluation through neutral point to extreme positive evaluation (Smith and Mackie, 1995). Classically, there are four popular approaches used to develop an attitude scale (Stahlberg and Frey, 1992; and Lindgren, 1973). These are: Thurstone's equal appearing interval; Semantic differential; Likert scale; and the one- item rating scales.

3.5 Justifying the selection of the three-components model of attitudes for the study.

For the purpose of this dissertation, the three-component model of attitudes offers a way to analyse primary teachers' attitudes towards IE. The placement of children with SEN in mainstream classes in Malaysia is still at the planning stage, thus more information is required in order to implement it effectively. The three-component model allows for relatively 'fine tuning' in the initial descriptive phase in order to identify what are teachers' attitudes to IE implementation. Analysing attitudes in terms of their cognitive, affective and conative components will help to find out the relative strength of each of the three dimensions. Given the nature and scope of this study, the three-component model has been adopted because it is descriptively adequate.

3.6 Implications of the three-component model of attitudes on inclusion

The implication of the three-component model of attitudes implies that teacher attitudes towards inclusion would be dependent on some or all available cognitive, affective and conative information about what would be involved in the process of inclusion. It is this information that will shape their thoughts, feelings and intended behaviour, that is, their overall attitudes towards accepting children with SEN in mainstream classes.

The cognitive element of teacher attitudes would be influenced by teachers' perceived knowledge of children with SEN. This knowledge could have been developed through actual experience of interacting with these children. If the experience had been positive, it could be assumed that they might have developed a positive outlook about the children and they would have a favourable view of the inclusion process. But if their experience had been negative, they might eventually view the concept of inclusion in a negative light.

Besides personal experience, perceived knowledge of children with SEN could also have been acquired through reading and listening to others. This knowledge would naturally shape teachers' beliefs about and perception of children with SEN. This in turn would influence their attitude towards inclusion. It is important that teachers' knowledge or beliefs about children with SEN be taken into consideration prior to inclusion implementation, since the teachers' ideological perceptions of these children do not start from a neutral point, and do not originate solely from the characteristics exhibited by individual children when they enter mainstream classes. Hence the cognitive component of attitudes would be a guiding factor for teacher reaction towards inclusion implementation.

The affective component of attitudes would in some measure relate to the humanitarian side of teachers' characteristics. Even if teachers have negative feelings or are non-committal about the inclusion process, repeated exposure to the emotional experiences of children with

SEN might change their expectations and might gradually shift their feelings from negative to positive.

As for the conative component of attitudes, this again is strongly shaped by the amount of a teacher's personal involvement in the past with children with SEN or by their knowledge of these children. Their past behavioural response to these children or what they had heard or read about them could have moulded their attitudes, and this in turn could determine their behavioural predisposition towards these children being taught in mainstream classes. This predisposition to act is usually derived or inferred from the affective and cognitive elements of teachers' attitudes.

3.7 Conclusion

Teachers' attitudes towards the innovation of inclusion could be determined by their beliefs, knowledge and feelings towards children with SEN. These three elements could, either patently or inadvertently, determine both their actual and potential responses to IE implementation. Hence teacher attitudes in general could determine what individual teachers will see, hear, think and do if children with SEN are included in mainstream classes. In the view of Alghazo and Gaad (2004), if a country is aiming to change its education system and push for the inclusion of students with disabilities in regular classrooms, then teachers' attitudes need to change. And for change to occur, there is need for proper planning. The inclusion of children with disabilities, as an effective way of providing educational services for all, needs to be brought to the attention of as many teachers as possible, especially to newly qualified teachers. In order for teachers to gain positive attitudes, local education authorities have an important role to play. Workshops and other forms of professional development could be helpful for creating what is called an 'inclusion culture' among serving teachers. Student teachers, however, need to learn more about the inclusion of all students in regular classrooms in a practical, rather than a theoretical way, so as to help them gain a balance of attitudes at the start of their career. Planned field visits to classrooms where students with disabilities are included could be one way of achieving this.

Factors influencing general teacher attitudes towards the inclusion of children with SEN have been the focus of many studies undertaken in various countries in the world. The next chapter will attempt to extract from these studies some of those factors that have been found to influence teachers' attitudes to inclusion of children with SEN. This analysis will be done in the belief and hope that it may well inform Malaysian IE policy and practice. One highly important finding from teachers' attitudes towards inclusion is that the statistical means of all three components of attitudes (cognitive, affective and conative) are significantly correlated with the mean measure of their self-perceived skills. That is, respondents who perceived themselves as competent enough to cater for SEN pupils, appear to hold positive attitudes towards inclusion (Avramidis, Bayliss and Burden 2000; Lamie 2004).

This chapter, in discussing theory of attitudes and attitude objects, has touched on the need for systematic evaluation of attitudes so as to inform programme managers how to implement effectively the wishes and aspirations of the political creators of the IE policy in Malaysia. The following chapters will examine the background to IE development and will describe the groundwork of present investigation which may ultimately inform programme managers of factors worthy of attention when implementing SEN changes.

This chapter reviews the literature relevant to teachers' attitudes towards inclusive education. It will highlight the development of policies, strategies, guidelines and procedures relevant to teachers' attitudes towards the performance of their roles and responsibilities as developed in the process of their own education and basic training. This is followed by the various professional competency profile standards which define and codify the types of basic knowledge and skills required as guidelines in the education and training of teachers. Literature suggesting the need for education and training in IE is also discussed. Such considerations are relevant to the shaping of decisions regarding the focus of this study.

4.1 Teacher attitudes towards inclusion

The philosophy of inclusion was developed from the practice of integration with a strong human rights and social justice perspective (see section 3.1.4). The establishment of the present Malaysian IE policy is to ensure that every child with SEN has the right to be educated within the mainstream schools' environment setting. The educational personnel most involved in the execution of IE in Malaysia would without doubt be RMCTs, for they are the basic professionals who will carry out the primary responsibilities of IE. They could both facilitate or constrain the implementation of this policy. Hence, there is a need to study Malaysian RMCTs' attitudes to IE, prior to its implementation. Clough (1995:127) in stressing the importance of teachers' involvement in the placement of children with SEN in mainstream classes (integration) states,

"The issues and practice of integration make many, often threatening demands on teachers who may be required to develop new roles and new ways of working within new and unpredictable systems...Such changes in policy clearly depended for their success to an important degree on the professional orientation and motivation of the staff that are charged with realising them. If teachers are seen as mediators of policy at classroom and school levels in this way, then - both for evaluation of that

policy and its development - we need to be able to identify and describe the ways in which teachers engage with and feel about their work”.

The importance of teachers' attitudes for the success of inclusion has been reinforced by several studies on inclusion and integration (Forlin,1995;Sanchez,1995:Leyser, Kapperman and Keller, 1994;Ward et.al, 1994;Beh-Pajoooh, 1992;Center and Ward, 1987, Leyser and Leysen,1985; Thomas,1985 and Larrivee,1981). Chazan (1994) and Jamieson (1986) in their review of literature also concluded that teachers' attitudes are important in the implementation of an inclusion policy. The politics of educational innovation have caused integration to predate inclusion chronologically. Since both integration and inclusion present common though not identical challenges for teachers, each approach needs to be considered. As stated by Larrivee (1981:34) about mainstreaming (integration), which was by followed by inclusion,

“...the manner in which the regular classroom teacher responds to the special child's needs may be a far more potent variable in ultimately determining the success of mainstreaming than any administrative or curriculum strategy.”

Therefore, inclusion should not be initiated on the assumption that teachers would automatically and wholeheartedly accept children with SEN in their classes and take full responsibility for meeting all their educational needs.

When translated into practice, inclusion would appear to depend in large part on the readiness of teachers to maximise the educational potential of the child with SEN. The willingness of teachers to fully accept these children would affect the children's social and emotional adjustment as well as their academic achievement. This willingness is crucial, since included children with SEN will take up a good deal of teacher time, whatever system of support is provided. The children's adjustment could be greatly enhanced by the positive attitudes of teachers, for they could facilitate cohesive grouping across the inclusive dimension. The development of cohesive group activities would also influence the general progress of children with SEN, as well as mainstream children.

IE implementation may make Malaysian RMCTs anxious. They may fear, with some justification, that they would not be able to cope with the new demands in addition to their present teaching commitment. Children with SEN could complicate RMCTs' daily teaching routine. Thus the possibility of RMCTs harbouring negative attitudes towards the Ministry's IE policy may be increased by those who would argue that children with SEN are best helped by being placed in a wholly segregated setting, as is currently practised in primary education (see section 2.2.2). This argument is supported by Braaten et al (1988) cited by Chazan (1994), who challenge the belief that any kind of placement in mainstream classes is good for children with SEN. They argue that not all children with SEN could be appropriately served in mainstream classes, and that they may prefer to leave what could be a humiliating mainstream environment and return to the safer and more protective environment of special units or schools. This runs counter to much of the wider international perspectives in the literature (Ainscow 2005).

Children with SEN could arouse very strong emotions in Malaysian RMCTs who could feel a sense of failure if they were not able to deal with these children. Such failure could result in lower self-esteem, as well as in anger and frustration in response to possible perceived acts of disobedience, impertinence or disruption of the normal class routine by children with SEN. Thompson and Arora (1985) cited by Chazan (1994) were of the opinion that the behaviour of children with SEN particularly concerns teachers. Teachers worry that the usual balance in their classes may be upset by the introduction of the child with SEN, who may not be able to conform to mainstream class culture. This could, if translated to the Malaysian situation, reinforce any unfavourable dispositions of RMCTs towards children with SEN. Even if RMCTs exhibit positive attitudes toward the principle of IE, they could still have negative attitudes towards individual children with SEN in their everyday pedagogical interactions with them. Rice (1985), cited by Center and Ward (1987), argued that successful integration and inclusion policies depend more upon not alienating teachers than upon ensuring their active co-operation to ensure that initial implementation strategies are effective.

4.1.1 Non-Malaysian research

There are differences in teachers' attitudes towards the inclusion of children with SEN, both within and between countries. In his study involving 273 educators in Western Australia, Forlin (1995) found that educators generally perceived inclusion to be stressful for teachers; they also felt they had little control over decisions regarding implementation of the policy. Educators also regarded inclusion to be viable only for certain types of children with SEN.

Ward, Center and Bochner (1994) studied teacher attitudes towards inclusion in the state of New South Wales, Australia. Their sample consisted of a total of 2219 teachers and 332 resource teachers. Their findings showed that, within the context of the amount of resources available during the study, the majority of teachers (80%) either agreed or strongly agreed with the general concept of inclusion. However they found there were considerable attitudinal differences to inclusion based on teachers' professional status, with the most cautious attitudes being expressed by mainstream teachers.

Leyser, Kapperman and Keller (1994) undertook a cross-cultural study of teachers' attitudes towards inclusion in the United States, Germany, Israel, Ghana, Taiwan and the Philippines. Their findings showed appreciable differences in attitude to inclusion among these countries. Teachers in United States and Germany had the most positive attitudes. Positive attitudes in the United States were attributed to inclusion being widely practiced as the result of Public Law 94-142. Teachers in Germany exhibited positive attitudes to inclusion, though at the time of the study Germany had no special education legislation, their teachers were not provided with special education training, their children with SEN were educated in segregated settings, and inclusion was being practised only on an experimental basis. Teacher attitudes were significantly less positive in Ghana, the Philippines, Israel, and Taiwan. The authors reasoned that this could probably be due to limited or non-existent training for teachers to acquire inclusion competencies. There were also very few opportunities for inclusion in these countries. Perhaps most significantly, none of these countries had a history of offering children with SEN specially designed educational opportunities. From my Malaysian perspective this is a serious deficiency which needs to be recognised and remedied.

Beh-Pajooch (1992) studied the attitudes of 74 British full-time tertiary college teachers to the inclusion of students with SEN into their courses, and found that the majority of his respondents expressed positive attitudes towards the inclusion of students with severe disability. Shimman (1990) did a similar study based on 126 British further education college staff and demonstrated that the overwhelming majority of staff saw the presence of students with learning difficulties in their college as a positive development, both for the students themselves and for the college as a whole. Again, from my Malaysian perspective, this is a valuable investigatory approach worthy of being replicated in the Malaysian further education setting.

Bowman (1989) did a study for UNESCO of approximately one thousand teachers' experience with children with SEN across fourteen countries (Egypt, Jordan, Colombia, Mexico, Venezuela, Botswana, Senegal, Zambia, Australia, Thailand, former Czechoslovakia, Italy, Norway and Portugal). Her findings showed that teacher attitudes towards the general concept of inclusion varied. Countries with high support for inclusion (ranging from 47 to 93 per cent) had laws requiring this practice. Teachers from countries which offered the most sophisticated segregated educational provision were less supportive about inclusion (ranging from 0 to 28 per cent).

Thomas (1985) surveyed 550 educators' attitudes on inclusion in Devon and Tucson, Arizona, United States of America. Tucson Unified School District had a long tradition of including children with intellectual disabilities in mainstream classes, and Devon had a tradition of educating similar children in special classes or special schools. His findings showed that teachers in both settings were opposed to inclusion.

From these studies it can be concluded that there are many differences in teachers' attitudes towards the inclusion of children with SEN. These differences occur both between countries and within countries. They possibly reflect a wide range of teacher experience as well as a range of attitudes to the concept of inclusion. These factors are in many ways inter-related, and their impact on teacher attitudes may well differ from country to country. Nevertheless

they have an important influence on the shaping of teachers' attitudes to the general concept of inclusion. It therefore seems justifiable to hypothesize that research in Malaysia will reveal a similar range of attitudes among RMCTs as has been found in other countries.

4.2 Variables influencing teacher attitudes to inclusion

Many variables influence teacher attitudes to inclusion. Using the typology developed by Salvia and Munson (1986), these variables can generally be categorized into three groups: (1) child-related, (2) teacher-related, and (3) educational-environment related.

4.2.1 Child-related variables

Several studies have been carried out to determine teachers' attitudes towards different categories of children with SEN and their perceived suitability for inclusion. Teachers' concerns regarding children with SEN normally consist of the types of disabilities, their prevalence and the educational needs they exhibit (Clough and Lindsay, 1991). Generally, teachers' perceptions can be differentiated on the basis of three dimensions: physical and sensory, cognitive and behaviour-emotional.

' Kids shouldn't get away with bad behaviour'; 'my job is to teach mathematics; if they don't want to learn they shouldn't be in this school'; ' teachers are forced to do too much social work'; 'we are teachers, not therapists - we are not trained that way. ' .(Hanko 2003)

These beliefs highlight both a myth and some current difficulties experienced by many teachers: the myth that only a specially trained expert can deal with special emotional and social difficulties; and the reality of thousands of stressed and despondent teachers calling a teacher-support line for help about increasing workplace demands, conflict with colleagues and lack of support with difficult-to-teach children.(Hanko 2003)

Forlin (1995) found that educators were only cautiously prepared to accept a child with cognitive disability but more prepared to accept a child with physical disabilities. The degree

of acceptance for part-time integration is high for children considered to have mild or moderate SEN. The majority of educators (95%) believed that mildly physically disabled children should be integrated part-time into mainstream classes, and only a small number of educators (6%) considered full-time inclusion of children with severe physical disability as acceptable. Similarly, the majority of educators (86%) believed that only children with mild intellectual disability should be integrated part-time into mainstream classes. A very small number of educators (1%) considered part-time inclusion of children with intellectual disabilities viable because they thought it would be more stressful to cope with children with SEN full-time than part-time. Frolin claimed his findings showed that the degree of acceptance by educators for the placement of children with SEN in mainstream classes declined rapidly as the degree of disability, both physical and cognitive, was observed to rise, and that there was a distinct preference for part-time rather than full-time placement.

Ward, Center and Bochner (1994) assessed teacher attitudes towards inclusion of children with SEN whose disabling condition or education difficulties were defined behaviourally rather than categorically. With the co-operation of senior staff from New South Wales Department of School Education, Australia, they produced a list of thirty disabling conditions which they then defined behaviourally (see Ward et al, 1994, page 37 for list of the disability conditions). They felt that this behavioural categorization would have relevance for school practitioners, since traditional category grouping does not necessarily reflect the child's actual educational needs. In general teachers in their study had little disagreement about the inclusion of children with SEN perceived as having mild difficulties, since they are not likely to require extra instructional or management skills from the teacher. Included in this group of children were those with mild physical and visual disabilities and mild hearing loss. There was a common uncertainty about the suitability of including children with disabling conditions that in various ways posed additional problems and demanded extra teaching competencies from teaching staff. Included in this group were those with mild intellectual disability, moderate hearing loss and visual disability and hyperactivity. The teachers were unanimous in their rejection of the inclusion of children who were severely disabled (regarded as being too challenging a group and at the time of the study normally educated in special schools). This group consisted of those with profound visual and hearing impairments and

moderate intellectual disability. Children with profound sensory disabilities and low cognitive ability (mentally retarded) were considered to have a relatively poor chance of being successfully included.

Clough and Lindsay (1991) surveyed the attitudes of 584 British teachers and 70 head teachers towards children with SEN. They found that the majority ranked the needs of children with emotional and behavioral difficulties as being the most difficult to meet, followed by children with learning difficulties. Third in the ranking were children with hearing impairment. Clough and Lindsay attributed the low ranking of children with sensory and physical impairments to the relatively infrequent presence of these children in mainstream classes.

Bowman's (1989) study for UNESCO indicated that teachers tend to favour particular types of children with SEN for inclusion. Expressed in percentage terms, the most favoured for inclusion were children with medical (75.5) and physical difficulties (63.0). These children were considered easiest to manage in the classroom. Half of the teachers involved in the study felt children with specific learning difficulty (54.0) and speech defects (50.0) were suitable for inclusion. Around a third felt that children with moderate learning difficulties (moderate mentally handicapped 31.0) and severe emotional and behavioural difficulties (38.0) were suitable for inclusion. A quarter of teachers perceived children with sensory impairments, visual (23.5) and hearing (22.5), could be included in mainstream classes, and very few of the teachers considered that children with severe mental impairments (2.5) and multiple handicaps (7.5) could be taught in mainstream classes. There was a wide range between individual countries; this indicates wide differences of teacher attitudes on the suitability of children with various types of SEN for inclusion in mainstream schooling. The greatest differences of attitude between countries were about the inclusion of children with sensory impairments (visual and hearing) and the lowest was for the inclusion of children with moderate learning difficulties. Children with moderate learning difficulties and with severe emotional and behavioural problems were more favoured for inclusion generally than those with sensory (deaf and blind) impairments.

Jameison (1986), reviewing the American literature, claimed that in the majority of studies involving teachers who participated in the inclusion of children with SEN, teachers had a positive perception of those with sensory and physical impairment as being suitable candidates for inclusion in mainstream classes. In contrast, teachers had negative attitudes towards the inclusion of children perceived as being educable mentally retarded and emotionally disturbed. Negative attitudes towards these two groups of children were reinforced by the findings of studies undertaken by Thomas (1985) and were also consistent with the findings of studies reviewed by Salvia and Munson (1986) and Chazan (1994), even though in Bowman's study the opposite was true.

In all the studies mentioned, teachers seem generally to exhibit a more positive attitude towards the inclusion of children with physical and sensory impairments than to those with intellectual disability and behavioural-emotional difficulties. It can be hypothesized that the attitudes of RMCTs in Malaysia towards IE would depend in large measure on the types of disabilities which children with SEN present.

4.2.2 Teacher related variables

There are many teacher-related variables that seem to influence teachers' attitudes to inclusion. One of these is knowledge about children with SEN gained through formal studies during pre- or post-service training. This was considered an important factor in developing teachers' attitudes towards the implementation of an inclusion policy. Without a coherent plan for teacher training in the educational needs of children with SEN, attempts to include these children in mainstream classes would be difficult.

Janney et al (1995) interviewed 53 teachers and administrators in five school districts in Virginia, United States, who had worked with children with severe and moderate disabilities who had been recently integrated part-time into mainstream classes. They found that teachers stressed the importance of training activities for successful placement. They perceived these training sessions to be useful in addressing teachers' personal and professional attitudes and fears, these being believed to be the greatest barriers to inclusion. INSET was also seen as a

useful way for teachers to gain an understanding of the purpose of inclusion, thus making them more committed towards its implementation. In spite of the limitations of INSET courses, they could, if appropriate and well presented, help to modify negative attitudes towards children with SEN (Chazan, 1994). The importance of INSET is that it increases teachers' ability to find their own solutions to the problems faced in inclusive classes (Henko, 1990 cited by Chazan, 1994).

Leyser, Kapperman and Keller (1994) found that teachers with substantial training in special education had a significantly higher positive attitude than those with little or no training about inclusion. Their findings showed that information about disabilities and inclusion acquired through training enhanced the formation of positive attitudes. Therefore, they anticipated that as more effective training programmes on inclusion were offered to teachers, they would begin to have more favourable attitudes about inclusion.

The importance of training in the formation of positive attitudes about inclusion was supported by the findings of Beh-Pajoooh (1992) and Shimman (1990) based on teachers in a tertiary college. Both studied the attitudes of tertiary college teachers in the United Kingdom towards students with SEN and their inclusion into ordinary college courses. Their findings showed that college teachers who had been trained to teach students with learning difficulties expressed more favourable attitudes and emotional reactions to students with SEN and their inclusion than did those who have had no such training.

INSET is perceived as being important because it gives teachers the skills to meet the individual child's needs and the learning problems that arise in the class as the result of inclusion. INSET programmes it was argued should include not only skill-based packages but also aim to instill sympathetic attitudes among teachers towards children with SEN as a prerequisite to attitudinal change (Clough and Lindsay, 2000). In their study of the effectiveness of INSET, Clough and Lindsay found that teachers felt their attitudes towards children with SEN had not been as affected as they thought they would, but they agreed that INSET had played an important role in the dissemination of knowledge about inclusion policies and the development of skills for successful inclusion implementation. Generally,

Clough and Lindsay found that teachers who had attended INSET courses were more positive in their attitudes to inclusion than those who had not.

Several other studies tend to reinforce the view that special education qualifications acquired from pre- or in-service courses were associated with less resistance to inclusion (Bowman, 1989; Center and Ward, 1987; Leyser and Abrams, 1986; Leyser and Lessen, 1985; Larrivee, 1981 and Stephens and Braun, 1980 and in their review of the literature by Jamieson, 1986 and Salvia and Munson, 1986). These studies seem to suggest that training in special education, especially at in-service level, builds up teacher confidence, competence and knowledge in working with children with SEN, thus contributing to more positive attitudes.

Teacher confidence in their instructional and management skills influences their attitudes to inclusion. Handling many of the disabling characteristics which are common to a wide range of children with intellectual, emotional, behavioural, sensory and physical impairments is usually perceived as requiring additional teaching skills (Center and Ward, 1987). Lack of expertise would not only raise the level of anxiety among teachers regarding inclusion but might actually inhibit the use of their full range of teaching skills, which could result in innovative teaching solutions being avoided in favour of more conservative procedures.

Janney et al (1995) reported that when teachers receive assistance in mastering the skills required to implement an innovation, they become more committed to make it work. Therefore, it is considered important that teaching skills be developed so that once children with SEN have been included, there would be no question of their being excluded or segregated again. Studies by Leyser and Abrams (1986); Thomas (1985); Larrivee (198) and Stephen and Braun (1980) found that teacher perceptions of their competencies to teach children with SEN are a good indicator of their attitudes towards inclusion; if they considered themselves to have the abilities to handle the educational needs of these children, they would tend to exhibit positive attitudes towards the concept of inclusion.

However, Green, Rock and Weisenstein (1983) studied 168 college of education university students in the United States and found that there was a very low correlation between

knowledge and attitudes towards inclusion, partly because of the strong influence of the affective component of attitudes. They found that increasing pre-service teachers' knowledge in the various aspects of assessment and instruction of children with SEN did not concomitantly produce more positive attitudes towards inclusion as a general education policy.

Experience of contact with children with SEN or disabled persons was mentioned by several studies as an important variable in shaping teacher attitudes towards inclusion. LeRoy and Simpson (1996) studied the impact of inclusion over a three-year period in the state of Michigan. The assessment of teacher attitudes was based on the desirability of segregation, the responsibility for the education of children with severe difficulties and the benefit of inclusion for children with disabilities. They found on all three counts that teachers' attitudes changed in a positive direction over the three-year period. Their study showed that as teachers' experience with children with SEN increased, their confidence to teach these children also increased.

Janney et al (1995:436) found that experience with low ability children was an important contributing factor to their eventual acceptance by teachers.

"...Already wary of reforms and overloaded with work, general education teachers' initial balancing of the anticipated high cost of integration against its uncertain benefit created hesitation or resistance. Following their implementation experiences, teachers re-evaluate the balance between the cost of teachers' time and energy as compared to the benefit for students, and judged the integration effort successful."

Leyser, Kapperman and Keller (1994) found that overall, teachers with much experience with disabled persons had significantly more favourable attitudes towards inclusion than those with little or no experience (but no mention was made of the impact of experience upon attitudes based on country). In a similar vein, the findings of Beh-Pajooh (1992) showed that college teachers who had experienced social contact with severely handicapped students expressed more positive attitudes toward these students and their inclusion than those who had not experienced such contact.

Findings of several other studies (Leyser and Lessen, 1985; Harvey, 1985; Larrivee, 1981 and Harasymiw and Home, 19760) also place stress on the importance of increased experience and social contact with children with SEN, in conjunction with the attainment of knowledge and specific skills in instructional and class management, upon the formation of favourable attitudes towards inclusion. Leyser and Lessen (1985) showed that pairing INSET courses with actual experience with children with SEN was more effective in modifying teachers' attitudes than by having INSET courses only.

However, Forlin's (1995) study indicated there were differences between teachers who were currently involved with the policy of inclusion and those who were not. Those not involved (but who were aware of the concept of inclusion) believed that the stress of coping with a child with SEN and with a mainstream child could be equal. Those who were actively involved considered the stress of coping with the child with SEN to be greater than for dealing with a mainstream child. Thus this study indicated that experience of a child with SEN does not necessarily promote favourable acceptance for inclusion, owing to the stress factor.

The findings of Center and Ward (1987) showed that primary teachers were more tolerant of inclusion if no special class or unit was attached to their school; they claimed that contact experience with children with SEN did not result in the formation of more positive attitudes.

Thomas (1985) found that generally, teachers were against the inclusion of children with intellectual disability both in settings where inclusion was practised and also where it was not. The only difference in attitudes to inclusion between teachers in these two areas was that teachers in areas that practiced inclusion were significantly less opposed to it.

Teaching experience was another teacher-related variable cited by several studies as having an influence on teachers' attitudes. Forlin's (1995) study showed that acceptance of the child with SEN of physical disability was highest among educators with less than six years of teaching and declined with experience for those with 6-10 years of teaching. The most experienced educators (greater than 11 years of teaching) were the least accepting. Forlin also

obtained a similar result for the inclusion of a child with intellectual disability. His study seemed to indicate that as educators gained experience in teaching, they became less accepting of inclusion.

Leyser, Kappermean dan Keller (1994) also found that generally teachers with 14 years or less teaching experience had a significantly higher positive score in their attitude to inclusion compared with those with more than 14 years. They found no significant differences in attitudes to inclusion for teachers whose teaching experience was between 1-4 years, 5-9 years, and 10-14 years (no mention was made of findings based on individual country). Center and Ward (1987) found in their study that teachers with the least teaching experience (0-2 years) were consistently more tolerant towards inclusion than were their more experienced colleagues. Teachers with little or no experience of working with pupils with disabilities stated that they were anxious about including a child with SEN (Fox, Farrel and Davis 2004).

Harvey (1985) compared the willingness of teacher trainees and primary teachers to accept children with SEN in their classes. His findings indicated that there was a clear reluctance on the part of the more experienced primary teachers compared to teacher trainees in their readiness to include such children. But Stephen and Braun (1980) found that years of teaching experience was not significantly related to teachers' attitudes towards inclusion.

Educators' status was also perceived as being influential in the formulation of teacher attitudes. Forlin (1995) found that teachers from the Education Support Centres (special centres that cater for the educational needs of children with SEN requiring limited or extended support) were more accepting of a child with intellectual and physical disability than educators from regular mainstream primary schools which co-existed on the same site. His study showed that special education resource teachers had a more positive attitude to inclusion than had mainstream teachers.

Ward, Center and Bochner (1994) also found that there were indeed considerable attitudinal differences both within and between professional groups with regard to inclusion. Special

education resource teachers had the most positive attitudes, followed by principals, whereas the most cautious attitudes were expressed by mainstream teachers concerning the types of children with disabilities they felt would be suitable for inclusion.

Overline (1977), cited by Jamieson (1986), claimed that principals showed significantly more positive attitudes towards inclusion than either mainstream teachers or special education resource teachers. Schmelkin's (1981) study also indicated that special education teachers reflected fewer negative attitudes than mainstream teachers about the effect of inclusion upon the academic achievement of both mainstream pupils and those with SEN.

The variable of grade level taught was the focus of several studies in determining teacher attitudes. Leyser, Kapperman and Keller (1994) found senior high school teachers scored significantly higher on their attitude in favour of inclusion than did junior high school and elementary school teachers, and junior high school teachers had significantly higher scores than elementary school teachers (again no mention was made based on individual country). Both Salvia and Munson (1986) and Stephen and Braun (1980) reported that primary teachers were more willing to accept children with disabilities than were teachers of older children. Salvia and Munson claimed that as children's age increased teacher attitudes became less positive to inclusion, and one of the reasons for this was that older children's teachers are concerned more about subject matter and less about individual children's differences. This was supported by Clough and Lindsay (1991) who claimed that, for teachers more concerned with subject matter, the presence of children with SEN in the class is a problem from the practical point of view of managing class activity.

There were also studies on the effects of teacher gender on attitudes to inclusion. Leyser, Kapperman and Keller (1994) reported that overall, there were no significant differences in attitudes for the gender variable. Studies done previously by Beh-Pajoo (1992), Stephen and Braun (1980) and Harasymiw and Horne (1976) supported their finding. Harvey (1985) showed that there was a marginal tendency for female teachers to express more positive attitudes towards the idea of including children with behaviour problems than male teachers. Kelly, Bullock and Dykes (1977) cited by Chazan (1994) concurred with Harvey's findings when they surveyed 2,664 class teachers in the state of Florida, U.S.A.

The findings of the above studies on teacher-related variables seem to indicate that on several variables teachers' attitudes towards the inclusion of children with SEN were somewhat inconsistent. Only on two variables were the findings consistent, INSET and gender. Therefore the hypothesis may be posited that primary school teachers' attitudes to IE in Malaysia would depend on their teacher-related background characteristics. Ghesquiere, Moors, Meas and Vandenberghe (2002) presented findings clearly showing that teachers who were involved in inclusion innovations and who had encouraging experience gradually sided with the idea of inclusive education, and at the same time became more expert in their inclusive practice. Inclusion must not be limited to the mere fostering of belief in it; hands on experience of inclusive practice must be the baseline from which we move forward.

Finally, this hypothesis is of value because of its relevance to the arena of in-service education. If recent calls for school-based in-service education to address the problems and issues associated with the inclusion of students with severe and profound disabilities in mainstream classes are heeded by education authorities, the findings from relevant research will be required to inform the development of appropriate training programs for teachers. Theories such as that of 'selective adaptation' which are grounded in the actions and interactions of teachers should be relevant and useful in this regard. (O'Donoghue and Chalmers 2000).

4.2.3 Educational-environment related variables

Resource support is one variable related to educational-environment, which was regarded as an important factor in shaping teacher attitudes to inclusion. Generally, there are two types of resource support, human and physical. Janney et al (1995) found that the majority of RMCT were hesitant initially to accept children with SEN in their classes, for they anticipated a worst-case scenario where they and children with SEN would be left to fend for themselves. Later these teachers became receptive towards such children after having received necessary and sufficient support. Respondents acknowledged that support received from the relevant authorities was instrumental in allaying their apprehension that part-time integration would

result in extraordinary workloads. The availability of physical support like making buildings accessible and providing adequate and appropriate equipment and materials was also instrumental in the development of these positive attitudes. Besides those mentioned by Janney et al, other forms of physical support such as availability of adapted teaching materials (LeRoy and Simpson, 1996 and Center and Ward, 1987) and smaller classes (Clough and Lindsay, 1991; Bowman, 1989; Center and Ward, 1987 and Harvey, 1985) have also been found to generate positive attitudes towards inclusion.

There were two types of human support mentioned by several studies as being instrumental in the creation of positive attitudes to inclusion:

(1) Support from headteachers. Janney's (1995) study showed that enthusiastic support from headteachers was an a significant factor in the success of the part-time integration programme in the schools they studied. Chazan (1994), in his review of relevant literature, found that mainstream teachers have a greater tolerance of inclusion if headteachers are supportive. Center and Ward (1987) found that mainstream teachers whose headteachers had provided some form of support for the inclusion programme exhibited a more positive attitude towards its implementation than those who had none. (2) Support from specialist resource teachers. Janney found that one of the factors cited by their respondents that had contributed to the success of the part-time integration programme was in part a consequence of effective support, both interpersonal and task-related, provided by the school's special education teachers. Clough and Lindsay (1991) claimed that special education specialist teachers are important co-workers in providing advice to subject specialist teachers on how to make a particular subject accessible to children with SEN. The role of the special headteacher as a networker was frequently addressed. There was a recognition that they must not be perceived as 'empire builders' but be actively seeking to build partnerships (Attfield and Williams 2003). The headteacher has the challenge of balancing the pressure for children to achieve with supporting his/her staff (William and Gersch 2004). Center and Ward (1997) showed that children with mild sensory disability included in mainstream classes did not cause anxiety to mainstream teachers because of the confidence generated by the presence of 'itinerant' i.e. peripatetic teachers for these children. Their study showed that experience of working with itinerant teachers affects teachers' attitudes in a positive way.

Hence, in all the research mentioned there was consistency with regard to educational-environment related variables. Physical and human support was shown to be an important factor in generating positive attitudes amongst mainstream teachers towards the inclusion of children with SEN. It can thus be hypothesized that RMCTs' attitudes to IE in Malaysia would also be dependent on the educational-environment related variables. As far as the issue of resources is concerned, there is no doubt that adequate resources are essential; successful inclusion depends on resources, both human and material, but also on their successful implementation. Simply more people or more computers are not enough; rather, how the resources are being utilised is of utmost importance, and this issue has to be addressed at the school level within a whole-school policy and at the LEA level through a reorganization of the support services available (Avramidis, Bayliss and Burden 2000). According to Swart and Pettipher (2005), important trademarks of inclusive education are the effective utilization of existing resources and increasing additional resources, from within the school.

4.3 Conclusion and caveat

If the inclusion of children with SEN in mainstream classes is to be successful, teachers must perceive its implementation positively. From the studies reported I deduce that teachers' attitudes to inclusion are formed from multiple causation i.e. they are not easily predicted, they result from different causes and in particular are dependent on all three categories of variables, child-related, teacher-related and educational-environment related, which are themselves interrelated.

One important caveat needs to be entered here. The literature review presented here draws attention to educational practices from a variety of cultural/national contexts which are so diverse as to raise the question of how justifiable it is to generalise from the findings. The professional experience of the teachers and the historical evolution of professionalism within a particular national system help to explain some of the findings. It would be naïve in the extreme to assume these findings necessarily have direct relevance to further development in Malaysia. However, they are used here to inform my investigation into the Malaysian

situation. They will help to shape the instruments that will be used, and they will be referred to systematically in the discussion of the current research.

In almost all the studies reviewed here some form of inclusion is already being practised in the schools whose teachers were involved as respondents. Hence the majority of respondents had some idea of what is involved in inclusion. This is exactly the opposite of the situation in Malaysia at present.

In Malaysia IE is still at the planning stage, and the majority of RMCTs are not involved in the direct teaching of children with SEN under the Education Ministry's special education programme. At the professional level, only RMCTs in schools with SECs, or whose schools are neighbours of special schools or of mainstream schools with SECs, would probably have regular social contact with these children. Malaysia has yet to explore whether the diverse factors influencing teachers' attitudes to inclusion in other countries have the same impact on its own RMCTs' attitudes. And that is why they are now the focus of this present study.

This chapter presents the key focus of the study comprising a statement of my project. It covers the aims and objectives of the study and the assumptions that lie at the heart of teacher attitudes towards IE. The specific research questions deriving from the aims and objectives are also presented.

The implementation of IE in Malaysian mainstream primary schools will probably come in the form of a directive from BPK (Malaysian Ministry of Education). The success or failure of IE in Malaysia will depend to a large extent on the readiness of RMCTs to accept responsibility for children with SEN in their classes.

The introduction of IE will inevitably widen the range of children with special needs in mainstream classes. Presently, RMCTs in Malaysia are required to attend to the remedial needs of children in their classes who have learning difficulties. But with the introduction of IE, they will also be expected to address the educational needs of various types of children with SEN. Undoubtedly some RMCTs have reservations about accepting IE; some fear that children with SEN could be placed in mainstream classes as required by BPK directives, but would in effect be educationally excluded from general mainstream learning. Thus efforts are needed to determine the present attitudes of Malaysia's primary teachers towards the planned introduction of IE, and if necessary to initiate strategies to allay their anxieties.

By undertaking a study of primary teachers' attitudes towards the intended implementation of IE, I hope to gain a better understanding of RMCTs' attitudes. My brief in accepting sponsorship by my Ministry of Education was to explore some significant area of the IE field to be chosen by myself in conjunction with my academic supervisors at the university. I am required to present to the Ministry my thesis in its totality as a report of study undertaken. I hope to be in a position to make valid recommendations to the Ministry about how best to increase the chances of successfully introducing and establishing IE. Any such recommendations will be made solely on the basis of the study content and will not relate to any other of my professional experience or expertise. Nonetheless I am conscious of the fact

that the status of my report will be purely informative, and at this stage I cannot be certain if recommendations will be acted upon.

5.1 Statement of the problem

Current practice of educating children with SEN has restricted them from interacting fully with their more able contemporaries and has deprived them of the chance to develop a sense of ‘belonging’ and to be part of the school’s community.

Internationally, the process of placing children with SEN in mainstream classes takes place either through ‘integration’ or ‘inclusion’. The Malaysian Ministry of Education receives and studies reports about the developments in education in other countries of the world. It details these and adapts them to the Malaysian context. BPK has not yet determined whether IE in Malaysia is to occur through a process of ‘integration’ or of ‘inclusion’.

International studies have shown that teachers’ attitudes towards the placement of children with SEN in mainstream classes vary between countries. Previous chapters in this study have summarised the relevant extra-Malaysian experience. It has been noted that teachers’ attitudes to inclusion are affected by many variables, which may be generalised into three broad categories: (1) child-related, (2) teacher-related, and (3) educational-environment related.

Chapter 4 looked at a three-component model of attitudes. This model makes the assumption that teacher attitudes to IE are influenced by their cognitive, affective, and conative information about the target issues in this dissertation, IE. Ideally, if teachers have positive intellectual and emotional attitudes towards their pupils, this is likely to result in a positive conative component of attitude too, and vice versa.

The implementation of IE will probably involve making changes to the present school environments, and these changes will have to be based, to a large extent, on how primary teachers’ perceive and judge the introduction of IE. The Knoster model of ‘managing complex change’ discussed in chapter 3 proposes that in order to achieve coherent change to

support IE, a combination of visions, skills, incentives, resources and action plans are required.

Traditionally, primary teachers will generally comply with BPK directives. They will therefore be likely to implement IE, but will they put in the necessary effort and commitment to make it a success? It would be far from ideal if IE existed only because the Ministry's regulations required it. It would be catastrophic to the educational development of children with SEN if they were viewed by RMCTs as a nuisance and burden.

Arising from the aims of this investigation as discussed in the introduction and from the hypotheses already set out in preceding chapters, many of which arise from our review of the literature, I now restate my six key research questions:

- 1 What is the understanding of Malaysian regular mainstream class teachers (RMCTs) regarding inclusive education?
- 2 What knowledge do RMCTs have about the Ministry of Education's plans for inclusive education?
- 3 What are the general attitudes of RMCTs towards the intended implementation of inclusive education?
- 4 How do the teaching backgrounds of RMCTs influence their general attitudes towards inclusive education?
- 5 How do the perceptions of RMCTs regarding their ability to teach children with special educational needs relate to their willingness to support the implementation of inclusive education?
- 6 What extra resources and supports do RMCTs consider they would need in the event of the implementation of inclusive education?

Both quantitative and qualitative approaches were used to collect and analyse data to seek answers to the above questions, and this constitutes the content of the following chapter.

This chapter explains the methodology chosen for the research and it highlights several general theoretical considerations regarding both quantitative and qualitative approaches. It explains the research methods employed and the ethical issues formally addressed, it examines the method of data collection used, and it describes some of the strengths and weaknesses of the methods and their subsequent analysis.

Educational research is multifaceted and covers a diverse range of methods and methodologies. Educational research is essential because it helps to develop new knowledge about (inter alia) teaching, learning and educational administration. New knowledge is crucial because of its contribution to the improvement of current educational practice. Educational research uses a variety of methods deriving from diverse methodologies, both quantitative and qualitative, so as to seek answers to complex educational questions. Both the focus and the methodology of this investigation have been developed in order to identify, discuss and move forward on the central issue of Malaysia's intended nationwide introduction of inclusive education (IE). The following introduction to the methodology of this research draws on material from writers in developed countries who represent what is 'out there' in the field of educational research in general.

The focus of the study is on attitudes of teachers in mainstream educational settings. This is a complex area of investigation which does not yield clear, unambiguous data. The objectives of the study require complex methodologies to establish an analytic understanding within the complexity of what the current attitudes are and how they relate to IE, which is in itself a further complex concept. In order to address the complexities at the heart of this study, a process sometimes known as 'bricolage' (Denzin and Lincoln, 1996) has been adopted i.e. a handy and convenient combination of quantitative and qualitative approaches.

Patton (2002) regards scientific methodology as the fundamental paradigm and philosophical foundation underpinning behavioural research. Wildermuth (1993), Ingham (1984),

Hirschheim (1985), Grover and Fowler (1993), Layder (1993) and Merriam (1998) in their various ways all agree that the methodology employed within a project needs to proceed logically from the nature of the research question posed.

Cohen et al (2000) describe methods as being those sets of techniques and procedures which can be harnessed in the data-gathering process in educational research and used as a touchstone for references and interpretations, for explanations and predictions. According to Yin (1989) and Kaplan (1998) methods are the scientific tools whereby data and information pertaining to the problem under investigation are gathered and analysed. On the other hand, Maykut and Morehouse (1994) suggest that a study which derives its subject from human experience, as this work does, is of a qualitative nature in part and therefore demands the use of techniques made to fit the purpose.

6.1 Quantitative and Qualitative research

A quantitative approach assumes that the social environment constitutes an independent reality and is relatively constant across time and setting (Borg, Gall and Borg 1996). Educational research using quantitative approaches develops knowledge by collecting numerical data and then subjecting these data to statistical analysis. Such methods use mathematical models, statistical tables and graphs to emphasize the measurement and analysis of causal relationships between variables. Findings from such studies are based on carefully selected samples and then generalised to the general population. Quantitative approaches aim at objectivity, and are purported to be written within a value-free framework (Denzin and Loncoln 1994).

Qualitative approaches on the other hand assume that features of the social environment are constructed as interpretations by the individual researcher and these interpretations tend to be transitory and situational (Gall, Borg and Gall,1996). Qualitative approaches in education are multi-method in focus, involving an interpretative and naturalistic approach to their subject matter. Educational research using this approach studies things in their natural settings and is concerned with trying to make sense of or to interpret phenomena in terms of the meaning

that people bring to them (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994). Research using this approach develops knowledge by the collection of primarily verbal data through intensive case studies and then subjecting this data to analytical induction. It relies on multiple methods to understand complex phenomena, Willing (2001), Rubin and Rubin (2005),and Silverman (2006)

Despite differences between the quantitative and qualitative approaches, educational research does not always make exclusive choices between them. Often a combination of the two approaches is appropriately used. Quantitative and qualitative approaches can complement each other by supporting discovery and confirmation (Gall, Borg and Gall 1996). The combination of quantitative and qualitative approaches assumes that social reality is relatively stable and capable of confirmation, Gall, Borg and Gall (1996), and Neuman (2006). If this is not the case, then the findings of one study are not easily applicable to successive studies in the discovery-confirmation cycle.

For the purpose of the study, both quantitative and qualitative approaches are utilised in the research design for the data collection. Indeed Silverman (2006) argues for combining both quantitative and qualitative approaches on the grounds that this yields a fuller picture. Data collection regularly uses questionnaires and semi-structured interviews. These two techniques are chosen because they represent a systematic and hopefully reliable method for collecting data (Fink,1995a: Borgand Gall; 1989; and Cohen and Manion, 1995). In the work reported here, they have been employed in order to describe, compare, and explain attitudes and hopefully to illuminate some of the complexities in the debate about introducing inclusive education, and, even more hopefully, to suggest ways in which to facilitate its introduction.

The emergence of both quantitative and qualitative data in response to the nature of the research questions and content areas gives the writer an opportunity to integrate these two approaches to data collection and analysis. This is in agreement with writers such as Wildemuth (1993), Ingham (1984), Hirschheim (1985), Patton (1990), Gover and Fowler (1993), Layder (1993), Neuman (2000),Shenton (2003), and Silverman (2006), who suggest that the methodology to be employed for a particular project should emerge from the nature of the research question.

6.1.1 Questionnaire and Interviews

A questionnaire asks the same questions of all individuals who form the study's respondents. If the respondents comprise sub-groups, it is possible to vary the questions asked of each sub-group. Respondents may reply to each item in a questionnaire either verbally or in writing. The main advantage of using a questionnaire is the low cost of sampling respondents over a wide geographical area, and the time required to collect the data can be minimised. The present study used a questionnaire to gauge primary teachers' attitudes towards IE implementation in Malaysia. The questionnaire tried to elicit these teachers' perceptions of their knowledge, feelings and intended behaviour towards IE innovation. Collecting data through questionnaire and analysing it using statistical methods are useful in describing: (1) primary teachers' general attitudes to IE and its components, (2) teachers' background characteristics and their influence on these attitudes, and (3) the relationship between three major components of attitudes. Besides providing a general description of primary teachers' attitudes, the findings of the questionnaire (which was itself derived from a pilot study, to be discussed in section 7.2.4) were used both to modify items planned for the interview schedule, which was the second phase of the study, and to generate new items for it too.

Interviews consist of oral questions posed by the interviewer and oral responses made by the interviewees. Interviews typically involve individual respondents, but group interviews are also an option. Respondents in an interview reply to interview questions in their own words, and their responses can be recorded either verbatim on audiotape or videotape, through hand written or computer-generated notes, or in short term memory for later note taking (Borg, Gall, and Borg, 1996).

Questions in an interview can be modified if they are unclear. The advantage of using interviews is their adaptability; if appropriate the interviewer can probe deeply into the respondents' opinions and feelings, and he can always follow up a respondent's answers to obtain further information or clarify vague statements. Interview interaction are inherently spaces in which both speakers are constantly 'doing analysis –both speakers are engaged (and collaborating) in 'making meaning' and 'producing knowledge(Siliverman 2006)

For this study, interviews were used to produce evidence to illuminate and articulate the findings established by the questionnaire. They were used to support plausible explanations as to why primary teachers responded to the questionnaire in the way they did, and to cover aspects which the questionnaire was not able to yield, leading to greater clarity and understanding of teacher attitudes. The interviews were able to generate data which are relevant both to primary teachers and to decision makers in the Ministry in charge of the implementation of IE. It was considered that carrying out post-questionnaire interviewing would increase the chances of obtaining information that teachers would not normally reveal under other circumstances, especially those concerning negative self-aspects or negative feelings towards IE (Borg and Gall, 1989). Interviewing as a method of information gathering is generally a more flexible procedure compared with questionnaire completion, thus resulting in a greater likelihood of gaining more relevant and reliable information about attitudes to IE Clough and Lindsay (1995), Rubin and Rubin (2005), and Paker (2005)

An in-depth, semi-structured (i.e. with open-ended questions), face to face form of interview suggested by Salkind (1997) and Oppenheim (1992, 2000) was employed. The purpose of the interview was exploratory so as to get an in-depth understanding of the data collected from the sample of completed questionnaires.

Despite the face validity of the interview method, several weaknesses that may affect data obtained must be acknowledged. Patton (2002) argues that there are inherent limitations in interviewing as a data collection method. Specifically these are: the participants can report only their personal perceptions of and perspectives on the subject under discussion; interview data can be greatly affected by the emotional state of the interviewee at the time the interview session takes place; interview data are also subject to recall error and to the reactivity of the interviewee to the interviewer; and self-serving responses may be a further complication. However, Shenton (2002) believes that a collaborative atmosphere can limit deliberate falsehoods, and iterative questioning may reveal any attempts to mislead.

6.1.2 The relationship between qualitative and quantitative method in this study

A guideline useful for the methodology of this research has been provided by Yin (1994). His illustration reproduced in Figure 6 demonstrates the relevance both of quantitative and qualitative research methods (including ‘survey’ and ‘semi-structured’ strategies) such as I have employed.

Figure 6 Relevant situations for different research strategies

Strategy (Data gathering methods)	form of research question	requires control over behavioral events	focuses on contemporary events	strategy of the existing study
Experiment	how, why	Yes	Yes	No
Survey	who, what, where, how many, how much	No	Yes	Yes
archival analysis	who, what, where, how many, how much	No	Yes/no	No
History	how, why	No	No	No
Case study (semi structured)	how, why	No	Yes	Yes

6.1.3 The nature of the case study (interview)

In conducting qualitative research, Yin (1994) suggests that the type of questions asked will determine the kind of research strategy that must be adopted. According to him, a case study approach is appropriate for investigating “how” questions. In seeking an answer, the researcher does not try to influence or to control behavioural events. The subject studied is a contemporary and real-life phenomenon. The term “case study” has been defined in a variety of ways. As observed by Lincoln and Guba (1985) and Merriam (1998), there is no common understanding of what constitutes a case study.

Allison (1996:15) defines case study as “in-depth studies of particular events, circumstances or situations which offer the prospect of revealing understandings of a kind that might escape broader surveys”. In the case of this study, the concern is with studying a particular problem and their solutions in relation to a specific group or related groups. According to Hammersley (1989:93) case study involves “the collection and presentation of detailed, relatively unstructured information from a range of sources about a particular individual, group or institution, usually including the accounts of subjects themselves”. According to Yin (1994:14), a case study may be based on a combination of quantitative and qualitative evidence.

However, the validity of combining strategy (survey –quantitative and semi structured – qualitative) has been subjected to on going debate as suggested by Merriam (1998). Other writers such as Erlandson et al (1993), Krueger (1994) and Miles and Huberman (1994) point out that such mixing has become common but their views were not shared by all.

6.1.4 Connection between quantitative (survey) and qualitative (semi-structured) approaches

There are proponents and opponents of combining both these evidences. Trow (1957) argues that no single technique could claim to a monopoly on inference, and that recent decades have witnessed an increasing trend towards combining methods. Sieber (1973) supports the combined use of both field work and survey methods in the same study.

Smith (1983) argues that the two approaches cannot be combined, and Burrell and Morgan (1979) assert that different paradigms are “mutually exclusive”. The purists, believe that assumptions about knowledge and social reality lead directly to one or the other methodology (quantitative or qualitative) and that there is no way of combining these two research methods.

In contrast to the purists, situationalists focus on research methods and maintain that both approaches have value. However, although both approaches may be used in a single study, situationalists feel that certain methods are most appropriate for specific situations. For

example, in an evaluation of Thai education, Fry et al. (1981) used survey and demographic analyses to select extreme cases for in-depth ethnographic study. The Rural Experimental Schools study (summarized in Herriot, 1980) was composed of six substudies, each having a particular methodological emphasis. The most integrative of the six substudies (Rosenblum and Louis, 1981) was driven by quantitative methods and used case study materials as illustrations.

Vidich and Shapiro (1955) suggest that surveys provide “representative information” that is then elaborated through qualitative data, and that surveys often test hypotheses generated through fieldwork. Thus, each method has usefulness in a specific situation or phase of the research process. They viewed the two approaches as “complementary” but still as representing distant universes. Little integration of these two methods of research is fostered by either the purist or the situationalist view.

Nevertheless most pragmatists would agree with Denzin’s (1970) assessment that “a false dichotomy exists between these two types of data.” Daft (1983) argues that we “do not make the distinction between natural science (i.e. quantitative) and qualitative research techniques as separate avenues to significant research outcomes.” Daft (1983) and Cook and Reichardt (1979) elaborate the idea that quantitative methods are not necessarily positivistic nor are qualitative ones necessarily phenomenological.

Sieber (1973:1337) summarises the case for such a perspective: “If each technique has an inherent weakness, it also has an inherent strength unmatched by other techniques.” The trick is to tap the relative strengths and to make the most efficient use of both in attempting to understand social phenomena. Sieber (1973) and Madey (1982) outline how qualitative and quantitative methods can contribute to one another in the design, data collection, and analysis phases of a project. In addition Miles and Huberman (1984) offer useful detail on how the two methods can be linked in the design phase.

This brief review of the theoretical debate summarised by Yin (1994) on the relative merits of data gathering methods provides sufficient justification for the decision to combine both

qualitative and quantitative approaches in my own survey, and I now proceed to describe the nature of the population sample I was able to employ.

6.1.5 Population of the study

The subjects for the study were primary school teachers in the state of Melaka, South Malaysia. Educationally, the state of Melaka has seven administrative District Education Offices. These are centrally controlled by the State Education Department. The state has 349 (EPRD, 2005:3) national mainstream primary schools, and ten of these schools have Special Education Classes for children with Learning Difficulties. Only one of these mainstream primary schools has a Special Education Class that caters for the educational needs of children with Visual Impairment. The state has two special education primary schools for children with Hearing Impairment. Statistics published by EPRD (2005:3) indicate that there are 8764 primary teachers teaching in Melaka. The average number of teachers per primary school is 40.

6.2. Quantitative method : Questionnaire survey

6.2.1 Sampling

The following process was used to select an appropriate random sample of national primary schools using Bahasa Malaysia as the language of instruction for inclusion in this investigation: Educational provision in the state of Melaka comes from four Districts, and sampling of schools was undertaken from each of these four in the initial stage of the investigation. One of the Districts contained the primary school with special provision for VI, and another District contained the primary school for HI. All four Districts contained several primary schools with special provision for LD. All of these special facilities needed to be sampled for the study in order to have a fair representation of the views of the appropriate special teachers. Then there came the task of taking a representative random sample of primary schools in order to achieve an adequate number of serving teachers in the ordinary primary schools in each of the four Districts as respondents to the standard questionnaire.

The process of selecting ordinary national mainstream schools from each of the four Districts began by making an alphabetical list of all ordinary primary schools for each of the Districts. From each list two schools were selected randomly. The technique for this selection was randomly to open a book and the page number revealed was taken as the number set against a given school on the list. This was done twice, (1) once for even numbered pages, and (2) again for odd numbered pages. This resulted in a total of eight primary schools selected, as can be seen in Table 6. The table also shows that children receiving forms of SEN were available for study purposes from a total of 9 schools within the four Districts.

The next stage of the cluster sampling process was to select primary teachers from the total of 17 schools as respondents. All teachers in each of the seventeen schools were invited to participate in order to ensure that the number of respondents would be large enough to fulfil the necessary sample size conditions for using parametric statistical tests in data analysis, especially those involving t-test. (The resulting test sample numbers are to be seen in section 6.2.5). This procedure was considered sufficient to fulfil the requirement of the Central Limit Theorem which states that, if the sample size is large, the distribution of differences between sample means will be acceptable.

Table 6 : Primary school selected for the study based on Districts					
Types of primary schools	District Education Office/Number of primary school				Total
	A	B	C	D	
Ordinary mainstream	2	2	2	2	8
Special education (children with HI)	0	1	0	1	2
With special education classes for children with :					
a. LD	1	1	2	2	6
b. VI	0	1	0	0	1
Total	3	5	4	5	17

6.2.2 Instrument

A Primary Schools' Teacher Attitude (PSTA) scale was specially developed for this study. There were three reasons for rejecting standardised questionnaires on teacher attitudes to inclusion developed internationally.

1. The model of attitudes chosen for this study was the three-component model (see chapter 4). All of the standardised questionnaires found during the literature search were developed based on a one-component model of attitudes. No standardised questionnaire on attitudes to inclusion based on the three-component model was available.
2. All of the standardised questionnaires included items on 'special needs' not recognised by or not under the responsibility of the Malaysian Ministry of Education. Thus these items were not appropriate.
3. Standardised questionnaires developed internationally were also not suitable because of (i) cultural differences, and (ii) differences in educational structure, system, and practices.

Three important considerations were taken into account during the PSTA questionnaire construction: (1) The questionnaire had to be able to generate information to describe primary teachers' attitudes towards IE intended implementation. (2) Its findings had to be able to suggest guidelines in the development of items for the interview schedule. (3) Information yielded had to provide guidelines in selecting schools as samples for the qualitative part of the study. Therefore, a PSTA was developed specifically for this study. It was not the intention of the study to produce a standardised scale to measure primary teacher attitudes to IE. The assumption made in developing the instrument was that respondents answering the questionnaire were able and sufficiently motivated to disclose their true attitudes towards IE, and not simply give what they thought were the answers desired by the researcher. The questionnaires involved paper and pencil responses, and the main intention was to evaluate primary teacher attitudes towards IE. This was clearly stated to all respondents, and the researcher encouraged the respondents to question the wording of any of the PSTA items according to their personal attitudes.

6.2.3 Determination of PSTA questionnaire items content

6.2.3.1 Hypothesized attitude domains

Item content of the PSTA attitudinal sections of the questionnaire (Appendix 2-section A, B, and C) was constructed on the basis of ten domains of attitudes that were relevant to the current Malaysian primary schools' educational climate. The hypothesized domains selected were based on:

- i. Review of the literature to identify international issues and concerns regarding IE (see chapter 3).
- ii. The educational issues concerning IE in Malaysia (see chapter 3), and
- iii. Findings of studies done internationally on factors influencing mainstream teachers' attitudes towards the inclusion of children with SEN. (see chapter 5)

The ten hypothesized domains of attitudes towards IE selected to generate the content of PSTA scale items content were as follows:

- 1 Philosophy of IE.
- 2 Principles of the 'caring society' according to Vision 2020.
- 3 Types of children with SEN under the responsibility of the Malaysian Education Ministry's special education programme.
- 3 Social, emotional and cognitive development of children with SEN in mainstream classroom setting.
- 4 Cognitive functioning of children with SEN.
- 5 Behaviour of children with SEN.
- 6 Effect on mainstream children's educational development as the result of introducing IE.
- 7 Effect on teachers' current workload as the result of introducing IE.
- 8 Perceived ability of RMCTs to teach children with SEN.
- 9 Perceived readiness of mainstream primary schools to adopt IE programmes.

6.2.3.2 Model of attitudes

As a result of using the three-component model, the PSTA attitude scale was categorized into three components: (1) cognitive, (2) affective, and (3) conative, for each of the ten hypothesized domains, (see Appendix 1).

Section A (cognitive) of the PSTA attitudinal scale (see Appendix 2) was for the purpose of gaining information on RMTC's perceived knowledge of IE in Malaysia; section B (affective) was to elicit information on how primary teachers feel about the placement of children with SEN in mainstream classes; section C (conative) was to determine under what circumstances RMTCs would be willing to accept IE.

6.2.3.3 Factors related to teacher attitudes

Besides categorizing the ten hypothesized domains of the attitudinal scale into the three components of attitudes, each domain was further subdivided according to the three groups of variables (see chapter 4) that had been found in previous studies to be influential in shaping RMTCs' attitudes towards IE (see Appendix 1). These three groups of variables were classified as (1) child-related, (2) teacher-related, and (3) educational environment-related.

Not every hypothesized domain used for item construction was related to the three groups of variables. Domains that were related to the child were domains 3, 4 and 5. Those that were related to educational environment were domains 1 and 2. Domain 6 was related to both child and educational environment, and domain 7 was related to both child and teacher (see Appendix 1).

Interrelating the ten hypothesized domains with the three-component model of attitudes, and with the three groups of variables resulted in the production of a 10 by 3 by 3 matrix grid which was used as a guide for PSTA attitude scale items construction, (see Appendix 1).

6.2.3.4 Number of items

A total of 40 items was initially produced. As a result of the pilot study one item from section A was deleted (see section 6.2.4). The number of items in the PSTA attitudinal scale for the actual study was 39, and the number of items for each of the three sections is as in table 7. The rationale for each item constructed is as in Appendix 3.

Table 7 : Numbers of items in the attitudinal scale according to section		
Section A (cognitive)	Section B (affective)	Section C (behavioural)
9	22	8

The majority of items constructed was for section B because in the Malaysian context, where IE has yet to be implemented officially, it was felt that gaining information on RMCTs' feelings towards IE is crucial for its successful implementation in mainstream primary schools. The assumption is that if the affective component of teacher attitudes is positive, they would make an effort to search for and acquire the knowledge needed to teach children with SEN. It is also assumed that a positive affective component would also make them more willing to react positively to IE.

6.2.3.5 Term used for item construction

The criterion adopted in choosing the wording of items was that all the responding teachers, regardless of their special education teaching background, should clearly and easily understand the statement content of each individual item. In order to fulfil the aforementioned condition, usage of technical terms usually associated with special education was avoided. Thus the term IE was purposely omitted from all items in the PSTA.

Items in section A and C were constructed to serve three purposes: The first was to find out the RMCTs' perceptions of their knowledge of, and abilities to meet the educational needs of children with SEN, plus their likely reaction to these children if included in mainstream classes. The second purpose was to ascertain SETs', RETs' and headteachers' perceptions of RMCTs' knowledge and abilities to meet the demands of educating children with SEN. It was also to gain their views on the likely reaction of RMCTs to IE introduction. In order to fulfill

the two objectives, the term ‘regular teachers’ was used for every item in section A and C of the PSTA attitude scale.

Items in the PSTA attitudinal scale were worded either positively or negatively. An agreed response to positively worded items would represent a positive evaluation for the attitude component concerned. A disagreed response to negatively worded items would also represent a positive evaluation for the attitude component related to it. The opposite is true for both negatively and positively worded items. The arrangement of positively and negatively worded items in the attitudinal scale was not made in any particular order. Initially, in the English version of the scale, the number of positively and negatively worded items in section A and section B was made equal. During the translation process to Bahasa Malaysia it was decided after discussion with translators (further discussion in section 12.3.9) that some of negatively worded items would make a better Bahasa Malaysia statement if worded positively. This resulted in an equal number of positive and negative worded items in section A. Section C contained eight item statements on some of the conditions that could encourage RMCTs to react more positively towards accepting the placement of children with SEN in mainstream classes. Since willingness to accept IE on whatever conditions is interpreted as positive evaluation for the conative component, all items in this section except one were defined as having positive orientation. Again it was agreed (during discussion with translators), that item 33 of section C (see Appendix 2) would make a better statement in Bahasa Malaysia if worded negatively, preventing it from being too similar to item 37 of the same section. A summary of the positive and negative worded items as they appear in the PSTA is shown in Table 8.

Table 8 : Positive and negative worded items in PSTA		
Section	Positively worded items	Negatively worded items
A	2, 3, 4, 7, 8, 9	1, 5, 6
B	10, 13, 15, 18, 20, 22, 25, 26, 28, 29, 31	11, 12, 14, 16, 17, 19, 21, 23, 24, 27, 30
C	32, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39	33

6.2.3.6 Method of responding to items in PSTA attitudinal scale

The ‘probabilistic summated-rating method’ developed by Likert was used to record the responses to the PSTA attitudinal scale. Respondents were requested to express the extent of their agreement or disagreement to every item statement on a five-point forced-choice continuum as in table 9. An intermediate category ‘undecided’ was provided between the two extremes of the continuum.

Table 9 : Range of response to item statement
1 - Strongly Disagree (SD)
2 - Disagree (D)
3 - Undecided (U)
4 - Agree (A)
5 - Strongly Agree (SA)

6.2.3.7 Biographical data

Also included in the PSTA questionnaire were items pertaining to various Malaysian primary teachers’ biographical variables. Teachers’ biographical characteristics are mentioned in several international studies on inclusion as being influential in shaping teacher attitudes toward the inclusion of children with SEN (see chapter 4). Thus the aim of the biographical items was to ascertain Malaysian primary teachers’ background characteristics which may be responsible for shaping their exhibited attitudes towards IE. Biographical variables chosen for inclusion in the PSTA are as in Appendix 4 (the framework in Appendix 4 was also used as a guide in the construction of the PSTA questionnaire). The option of “mentally retarded” was not put forward as a choice for items 13 and 15 of the biographical variables because the educational facilities of special education primary schools are only made available for children with HI and VI. Facilities for special education schools are only available for children with severe LD under the Ministry of National Unity and Social Development.

Two items in the form of open-ended questions were also included as part of the questionnaire. Unsolicited comments by several respondents from the pilot study prompted the incorporation of these additional items. Hence items in the finalised PSTA questionnaire

used for the actual study were divided into three parts: (1) biographical data, (2) attitudinal scale, and (3) open-ended questions (see Appendix 2).

6.2.3.8 Instruction to respondents

Ethical issues.

The ethical issues arising within the context of this research had been given extensive consideration from the outset. As mentioned by Cohen et al (2000), ethical issues may arise:

From the nature of the research project (ethnic differences in intelligence, for example; the context of the research (a remand home); the procedure to be adopted (producing high level of anxiety); methods of data collection (covert observation); the nature of the participants (emotionally disturbed adolescents); the type of data collected (highly personal information of a sensitive kind); and what is to be done with data (publishing in a manner that causes participants embarrassments (Cohen et al, 2000: 49).

Although the ethical issues stemming from the context of this research are much less sensitive than those described by Cohen above, several ethical considerations so far as the questionnaires and interviews are concerned have been accounted for.

As a necessary preliminary before approaching schools and teacher respondents, the initial research proposal, comprising details of the research methods and explanatory literature for teachers and officers was submitted to the University ethics committee in 2005, and was approved. The ethical issues of the questionnaire and interview procedures were raised at the start of the interviews on site in Malaysia with each respondent, and signed informed consent was obtained on every occasion. It was explained that the names of all participants were anonymized as were the settings where the interviews took place. All interviews were recorded by audiotape for transcription, to be used only for research analysis, and were kept in

a securely locked place. The participants were later presented with a transcript of their interview and were offered the chance to alter or withdraw parts of the transcript if they felt it misrepresented their comments or for whatever reason.

The front cover of the PSTA questionnaire (see Appendix 5) contained explanations to respondents about the rationale of the study. Also included was my personal identity, and on whose behalf the study was being undertaken. Attempts were made to explain albeit briefly how children with SEN under the Ministry of Education are currently being educated, and how these children would be educated under the planned IE programme. Respondents were given the assurance that all information would be held in the strictest confidence. Since respondents were not asked to identify themselves in any form, anonymity was guaranteed. Respondents were strongly requested to respond to all the items in the attitudinal scale as honestly as possible. It was made clear to all respondents that there was no right or wrong answer for any item. Instructions on how to record responses to every item in the attitudinal scale were provided at the beginning of the scale and on every subsequent page.

As a consequence of the pilot study, clear instructions were given to the various groups of responding primary teachers on how to respond to items in section A and C. This was done in an effort to avoid confusion. Instructions were as follows:

1. RMCTs were told in their instructions that the term ‘regular teachers’ referred to themselves as teachers teaching mainstream children. Hence, they should use themselves as reference when answering it.
2. Headteachers, SETs, and RETs from non-special education primary schools were asked to refer to their own school’s RMCTs when answering these items.
3. Teachers in special education primary schools were asked to use RMCTs they knew as reference when responding to these items.

6.2.3.9 Translating PSTA questionnaire

The English version of the PSTA questionnaire was translated into Bahasa Malaysia. The main priority for the translation process was to ensure that the items’ contents and meaning

were the same in both languages. No attempt was made to produce a literal or word by word translation.

To check that the content and meaning of items in both the English and Bahasa Malaysia versions were the same, the help of our Malaysian postgraduate students studying at Northumbria University and Newcastle University was enlisted. The fields of study of the four Malaysian students were as follows.

1. Masters in Lexicography.
2. Masters in Economics.
3. Doctorate in Business Administration (Tourism).
4. Doctorate in Education (English).

To determine the clarity of all PSTA items, the original Bahasa Malaysia (used during the pilot study) version of PSTA was given to two Malaysian RMCTs to answer and comment on. Both of these RMCTs, one female and one male, were accompanying spouses of two Malaysian postgraduate students studying at Newcastle University and Northumbria University. Changes were made to both versions of the PSTA questionnaire based on their recommendation and comments, and the final version of the translated PSTA questionnaire used for the actual study is shown in Appendix 6.

6.2.4 Pilot Study

The translated PSTA questionnaire (original version) was piloted on Malaysian teachers studying in British universities and on those of their accompanying spouses who used to be teachers in Malaysia before their arrival in the UK. A common note explaining the Malaysian Ministry of Education IE programme was attached to every PSTA questionnaire. Six individuals, temporarily living in Bristol, Coventry, Manchester, Sheffield and Glasgow, were identified prior to sending the questionnaires, and the Bahasa Malaysia PSTA questionnaire was distributed to Malaysian RMCTs in the six areas through these individuals. A stamped addressed envelope was also attached with every questionnaire.

For the pilot study, both primary and secondary schoolteachers were used as respondents. There were two reasons for the inclusion of secondary school teachers. The first was to increase the number of respondents for the pilot study, and the second was to gauge the clarity of the PSTA questionnaire items. It was considered that all teachers receiving the questionnaire in Malaysia would be able to respond appropriately if none of the teachers in the pilot study in England encountered problems in answering it.

The total number of pilot study questionnaires distributed was 85. The number of questionnaires returned was 43. Replies from two respondents were rejected because they did not answer all of the PSTA attitudinal scale. Thus questionnaires from 41 (48% of the total) respondents were used in data analysis for the pilot study.

All respondents who returned the PSTA questionnaires indicated that they had no problems responding to any of the items. They all answered 'no' to the question, *'Are there any items in the questionnaire you are unclear of?'*

In consequence of data received from the pilot study, several modifications and additions were made to the final PSTA questionnaire. The format of one item in section A of the attitudinal scale was changed and moved to the biographical data, thus reducing the number of items to 39. Two open-ended questions were added to the scale, and special instructions to the various groups of primary teachers were also made. Findings from the pilot study were also used as guidelines in the development of the interview schedule for the qualitative part of the study.

6.2.5 Data collection procedure

Prior to visiting the sample schools (see section 6.2.1) two letters of permission were required from the relevant authorities of the Malaysian Ministry of Education. The first was obtained from the Education Planning and Research Development (EPRD) of the Ministry of Education. It is a Malaysian Ministry regulation that all research in government funded schools must first be approved by EPRD before being allowed to proceed.

The second letter was obtained from Melaka State Education Department, subject to EPRD approval. Headteachers would only allow entry and most importantly research to be undertaken in their schools after seeing these two official letters.

Upon acquiring the relevant documents, I made visits to each of the seventeen selected schools. All headteachers or first senior assistants (if the schools' heads were not on the premises that day) were briefed on the purpose of the study during the first visit to the school. They were also given an explanation of the significance of the study, and how the schoolteachers' responses to the questionnaire could help shape the future developments of the IE programme in Malaysia generally, and in Melaka specifically. Headteachers or first senior assistants were also encouraged during the briefing to ask questions concerning the study if they felt it needed to be clarified further.

Once the headteachers or first senior assistants were satisfied with the briefing, their cooperation was enlisted to help distribute the questionnaires to all teachers in their schools. This strategy of distribution was chosen because of the difficulty of my meeting every individual teacher personally within the school. The services of headteachers or first senior assistants were again enlisted to help collect the completed questionnaires from their colleagues. They requested a period of between seven to ten days to distribute and collect the completed questionnaires. On the agreed date, I visited the schools to collect these. Efforts were again made to brief headteachers who had been away during the first visit.

A total of 612 questionnaires were distributed in the seventeen schools. The number of questionnaires returned was 533. Three reasons given for unreturned questionnaires were: (1) several teachers were not in the school during the period the survey was undertaken, (2) a few of the teachers who received the questionnaires went for outstation duties and did not return the questionnaire prior to leaving the school, and (3) some teachers were reluctant to fill in the questionnaires for personal reasons. Of the 533 questionnaires returned, three were incomplete in the attitudinal scale section and were therefore discarded. A total of 530 (86.6%) returned questionnaires were used in the data analysis.

Table 10: Categories of primary teachers based on professional status.	
Category	Total number
Headteachers	12
RMCTs	417
SETs for children with	
a. HI	44
b. VI	8
c. LD	34
RETs	15
Total	530

Five out of seventeen headteachers who did not return the questionnaire were attending in-service courses organized by the Ministry of Education, and thus were not able to answer the questionnaire. Two were recently transferred to their respective schools, and both felt they were not knowledgeable enough about the teachers in their new schools to answer the questionnaires accurately. The group of SETs was further subdivided into three groups. The subdivisions were based on the types of children with SEN taught (the three types under the responsibilities of BPK of the Ministry of Education).

Table 11 sets out the background characteristic of the RMCTs. The total number of RMCTs who returned the questionnaire was 417. Because of missing data (not all of the biographical information was filled in by all the respondents) the number of RMCTs for several

background characteristics was less than 417. None of the RMCTs was from special education primary schools for children with HI because these schools do not have classes for mainstream children.

Table 11: Background characteristics of RMCTs		
Sex	Male	120
	Female	294
Grade level taught	Phase 1 primary	149
	Phase 2 primary	203
	Phase 1 and 2 primary	55
Attended in-service SEN courses	Yes	1
	No	416
Types of in-service SEN courses attended	HI	1

Table 11 : Background characteristics of RMCTs		
Presence of qualified special education teachers in schools	Yes	175
	No	242
Types of qualified special education teachers in schools	VI	16
	LD	159

Professional contact with children with SEN	Yes	175
	No	242
Types of children with SEN in contact with at the professional level	LD	127
	HI and VI	16
	HI and LD	32
Numbers of years teaching		83
	Under 5 years	106
	6 to 10 years	58
	11 to 15 years	85
	16 to 20 years	85
	More than 21 years	
School with SECs tried placement	Yes	52
	No	123

Table 11 shows that only one RMCT had attended in-service courses in special education. An important fact learnt during the administration of the questionnaire was that two schools with SECs had tried placing or were currently placing their children with SEN in mainstream classes. The school with SECs for children with VI had two children with moderate VI placed in mainstream classes during the time of the study. Another school with SECs for children with LD had tried placing these children in mainstream classes in 1995 and 1996 but discontinued this in 1997. Hereafter in this discussion these mainstream schools with SECs will be referred to as ‘schools with SECs tried placement’.

6.2.6 Data analysis

Attitudes (to IE) are complex and multifaceted. Therefore it was recognised that they cannot be captured by a single score, as is done in many attitude studies, or for that matter, by several scores. However, in order to highlight certain issues on attitudes to IE the study limits itself to four main scores and to four sub-scores for each of the three sections of the questionnaire.

Before analyzing the data, respondents' scores for negative items in the attitudinal scale of PSTA were reversed (see table 12) in order to maintain uniformity of item scores.

Table 12 : The reverse scoring for negative items of attitudinal section.
Choice of 1 was scored as 5
Choice of 2 was scored as 4
Choice of 3 remains
Choice of 4 was scored as 2
Choice of 5 was scored as 1

6.2.6.1 Sub-scale of the attitudinal scales of PSTA questionnaire

The process of creating sub-scales using a combination of items in section A and B of PSTA attitudinal scale was undertaken prior to data analysis. These sub-scales or factors were not created using the factor analysis method for the reason that it was not the intention of this study to produce a standardised instrument to measure teachers' attitudes to IE. It was constructed by grouping several items in sections A and B so as to produce descriptive information regarding attitudes to IE. This was done in order to give a fuller description of teacher attitudes towards IE implementation. These sub-scales or factors created are as follows:

1. K1 : Knowledge of IE (Items : 1, 2, 7, 8, 9)

Item statement deals with knowledge of the rationale and objectives of implementing IE. It is also concerned with the propagation of information about IE at the school level.

2. K2 : Ability to teach children with SEN (Items : 3, 4, 5, 6)

Item statement deals with the ability of RMCTs to teach children with SEN.

3. F1 : Advantages/disadvantages of IE to children with SEN (Items : 18, 19, 20)

Item statements deal with the advantages/disadvantages of IE for the functional development of children with SEN.

4. F2 : Appropriateness of Malaysian School National Curriculum

(Items : 27,28,29)

Item statements deal with the suitability of the UPSR for the education of children with SEN.

6.2.6.2 Scoring of PSTA attitudinal scale, each section and sub-scales

A total score for the attitudinal scale, individual sections of A, B and C, and the four sub-scales for each respondent was calculated by summing the scores of every item included in each category. Composite mean scores (CMS) for every category of item was calculated by dividing the summated total score by the total number of items in each category.

The range of CMS is from 1 to 5.

6.2.6.3 Interpretation of CMS

Figure 9: Division of composite mean score



In order to quantify mainstream teacher attitudes towards IE using the CMS, differences in CMS range were divided into five equal intervals, where each interval constitutes a score of 0.8 as in figure 9.

Using figure 9 as reference, the interpretations of CMS made are as follows.

1. A mean score of 2.60 and less was interpreted to mean that RMCTs have a negative attitude towards IE (labeled group 1).
2. A mean score between 2.61 and 3.4 would indicate that RMCTs have a non-committal attitude towards IE (labeled group 2).
3. A mean score of 3.41 and above would indicate that RMCTs have a positive attitude towards IE (labeled group 3).

Labeling of primary teachers according to the three groups of attitude to IE was done so that the percentage of primary teachers having positive, negative or neutral attitude could be calculated for the various issues of IE discussed in the study findings.

6.2.6.4 Instrument reliability

In order to have some degree of confidence in the findings from using PSTA, the Cronbach alpha internal reliability test was used to give a measure of the reliability of the PSTA attitudinal scale generally, for each section A, B and C, and for the four sub-scales. The internal reliability coefficient of the PSTA general attitudinal scale (for all 39 items) was calculated as +0.86. This relatively high reliability coefficient value seems to indicate that the PSTA attitudinal scale is reasonably reliable. The internal reliability of each component of the attitudinal scale was also calculated; the coefficient value for section A (cognitive component) was +0.65, for section B (affective component) +0.87 and for section C (behavioural component) +0.63. A probable explanation for the modest reliability coefficient values for sections A and C was that respondents were unable to gauge their true knowledge of IE and ability to teach children with SEN when answering items in section A. They were

also probably unable to state their actual behavioural reactions when answering items in section C. This is because the actual implementation of IE in mainstream primary schools has yet to be announced. Extensive discussion on the topics is rare amongst teachers in many mainstream primary schools.

Internal reliability coefficient for the four sub-scales containing three or more items was calculated and is as shown in table 13.

Table 13 : Internal reliability coefficient of sub- scales	
Sub-scales	Reliability coefficient
K1	+0.57
K2	+0.63
F1	+0.69
F2	+0.61

6.2.6.5 Instrument validity

Two types of non-statistical validity were made prior to the questionnaire's actual implementation: (1) Face validity, by four postgraduate Malaysian students during the process of instrument translation, and (2) content validity, undertaken by my two supervisors (English version of PSTA questionnaire). The open-ended responses and interview data were used to validate the finding of the PSTA attitude scales. As mentioned several times the aim of the questionnaire was generally to describe primary teacher attitudes to IE and to modify and generate items for the interview schedule. The open-ended item data and the interview data were considered adequate to validate the attitude scale findings (further discussion in chapter 8 and 9).

6.2.6.6 Statistical analysis

Parametric statistical tests using the SPSS statistical package were used in the questionnaire data analysis. This was justified in terms of the large size of the sample (i.e. 533) since it is generally appropriate to use a normal distribution-based test rather than a nonparametric test when the size of a sample is large enough (i.e. greater than 100). In general as sampling size

increases, the shape of the sampling distribution approaches the normal even if the distribution of the variable measured is not itself normal.(Norusis 1994) Prior to data analysis, efforts were made to identify extreme CMS for the PSTA general attitude scale, for sections A, B and C and for the four sub-scales. Five highest and lowest CMS were identified. Since these highest and lowest CMS were atypical of the other mean scores they were retained during data analysis. In data analysis, three methods of statistical analysis were employed, as follows:

1. Descriptive

Descriptive statistics were used to attain a general description of teacher attitudes towards IE and issues involved in its implementation i.e. mean scores and standard deviation, frequency and percentage count were employed.

2. Comparison

Primary teachers' background characteristics and their influence on attitudes towards IE were also ascertained for the study, using comparative statistics. Three statistical tests were used: t-test, one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) and multiple analysis of variance (MANOVA). Post-hoc Tukey- HSD was utilized to determine group mean differences for both ANOVA and MANOVA tests if α was statistically significant at 0.05 level.

3. Relationship

Besides description and comparison, inter-relationship between sections, sub-scales and items of the PSTA attitudinal scale were also determined. The statistical test used for this purpose was bivariate correlation.

6.2.7 Analysis of open-ended items

Teachers' written comments on both closed and open-ended questions were also analysed and incorporated as part of the findings.

6.2.7.1 : Item 40

A total of 455 teachers responded to item 40 of PSTA questionnaire. The number of primary teachers and their professional status that responded are as in table 14.

Table 14 : Number of teachers and their professional status who responded to item 40	
Professional status	Number
Head teachers	12
RMCTs	345
SETs	84
RETs	14

Of 345 RMCTs, 136 were from mainstream schools with SECs for children with SEN. From the total of 136, 129 RMCTs were from mainstream schools with SECs for children with LD, and 7 RMCTs were from the mainstream school with SECs for children with VI. Of 84 SETs, 34 taught children with LD, 42 taught children with HI, and 8 taught children with VI.

Primary teacher responses to item 40 were coded into three categories:

- 1) Disagree with the plan to implement IE. Teachers in this group were those who expressed their opposition using words such as: *impractical, disagree with the idea, do not support the idea/plan, maintain the present educational system, children with disabilities should remain in special institution/classes*. Included in this category were also teachers who did not use the phrases quoted when expressing their views on item 40, but expressed the problem/s if IE is implemented in mainstream primary schools. These categories of teachers were coded as “disagreed”.

- 2) Undecided in their opinions towards the implementation of IE. Teachers included in this group were those who agreed with the idea of IE with reservation/s. These teachers used *but* and *if* when expressing their opinions. These categories of teachers were coded as “undecided”.
- 3) Agreed with the plan to include children with SEN. The words used by these teachers were,; *agree with the idea, good idea, and need to be supported*. These categories of teachers were coded as “agreed”.

Reasons given by teachers for disagreeing, being undecided, and agreeing were coded as in Appendix 10.

6.2.7.2: Item 41

A total of 349 primary teachers responded to item 41 of the PSTA questionnaire. The number of teachers based on professional status who responded is as in table 15.

Table 15: Number and professional status of primary teachers who responded to item 41	
Professional status	Number
Head teachers	11
RMCTs	248
SETs	78
RETs	12

Of 248 RMCTs, 147 were from ordinary mainstream schools, 101 were from mainstream schools with SECs for children with SEN. Of the 101 RMCTs from schools with SECs, 96 were from schools for children with LD, and 5 were from the school for children with VI. From the total of 78 SETs, 33 taught children with LD, 39 taught children with HI, and 6 taught children with VI.

6.3 Qualitative approach: Interviews

6.3.1 Sampling

Information on biographical data gained from the quantitative approach was used as guidelines for selecting respondents for the qualitative approach. Only primary schools involved in the quantitative part of the study were considered for this, since the main aim of the interviews was to illuminate and articulate the questionnaires' findings. Two schools were selected because one has the only SECs for children with VI in Melaka and the other was the only school that had tried placing children with LD from SECs in mainstream classes.

The remaining fifteen schools were listed alphabetically according to the following groups: ordinary mainstream schools, mainstream schools with SECs for children with LD, and the special education primary school for children with HI. Two ordinary mainstream schools, two mainstream schools with SECs for children with LD, and one special education school were randomly selected in the sampling using the same technique as in the quantitative part of the study (see section 6.2.1). A total of seven primary schools was finally established in the sampling. The types and number of schools selected are listed in table 16.

Table 16: Primary schools selected in sample for the interview approach	
Types of primary schools	Number
1. With SECs for children with VI	1
2. With SECs for children with LD and had tried placement	1
	2
3. With SECs for children with LD	2
4. Ordinary mainstream schools	1
5. Special education school for children with HI	7
Total	

Respondents selected for interview from the selected schools were not randomly selected. Only teachers who volunteered to be interviewed were involved in the interview process.

6.3.2 Instrument

A semi-structured interview schedule was developed for this part of the study. The questions for the interview schedule were formulated from the issues on IE raised by the quantitative questionnaire approach, (especially research questions 1 and 10), and from pilot study findings. Issues used as references in the construction of the interview schedule were as follows:

1. Cognitive

- a. Primary teacher concepts of children with SEN and of IE
- b. Teacher perceived ability to teach children with SEN.

2. Affective

- a. Teacher perceptions of the suitability of children with SEN to be placed in mainstream classes,
- b. Teacher perceptions of the effect of IE on teachers' workload and how IE would affect the education of mainstream children,
- c. Teacher perceptions of the suitability of the National Primary School Curriculum for the education of children with SEN.

3. Conative

- a. Teacher willingness to support IE implementation, and the conditions for this support.
- b. Teacher willingness to acquire skills to teach children with SEN.

4. Others

- a. Teacher perceptions of the barriers to IE implementation in mainstream primary schools.

- b. Changes suggested by teachers at the school level prior to IE implementation.
- c. Teacher views on how to promote the acceptance of IE by RMCTs.

Initial questions (English version) for the interview schedule are shown in Appendix 8, and the rationale for each item in the interview schedule is shown in Appendix 7. For the actual study, questions in the developed interview schedule were modified according to the responses of the teachers interviewed, and relevant probe questions were prepared so as to get a better understanding of the issues under discussion. Minor modification of wording was also made as appropriate according to the professional status of the primary teacher being interviewed (see section 6.2.5). However such modifications did not deviate from the issues or substance of IE referred to during the construction of items for the interview schedule. Nor was the scope of the interview restricted to the questions in the interview schedule. Respondents were encouraged to talk about issues concerning IE which they felt needed to be raised if they had not been asked previously.

The same items on teacher background characteristics were again used, with modifications, for the interview schedule. Items on current professional status (Appendix 8 -item 4) for the interview schedule were categorized into four groups. Three new items were added to the biographical data for the interview schedule: respondents' code, schools' code/name and tape serial number. Also added was a statement on the ethics of the uses of the interviews. This was explained verbally to every teacher interviewed.

The English version of the interview schedule was translated into Bahasa Malaysia (Appendix 9) and the service of a translator was not required. Since all interviews were done face to face, any difficulties of understanding or interpreting the question could be immediately dealt with. It was also assumed for the purpose of the interview that respondents would be familiar with the issues of IE, since they had already answered the questionnaire.

6.3.2 Data collection process

Follow-up visits were made to all the primary schools in the sample to make arrangements for appropriate dates to begin interview sessions with the schoolteachers. An agreement was reached to allow several visits to each of the seven schools. Permission was given to access any of the teachers within the schools but only under the following conditions:

1. Only teachers who volunteered or those who were readily persuaded to volunteer would be interviewed. Headteachers or first senior assistants would not send out circulars directing teachers to participate.
2. Teachers could only be allowed to be interviewed during their free time. Interview sessions with individual teachers would stop as soon as the teacher concerned needed to attend to his/her timetabled class, and would be continued later, if the teacher agreed to it.

For schools with two sessions, efforts were made to involve teachers from both sessions.

Not all teachers initially approached agreed to be interviewed. Many needed coaxing before interview. Work commitments and time constraints were reasons cited by those who declined. For the interview sessions, teachers were interviewed either individually or in pairs. Pairing of teachers for interviews was unavoidable because: (1) several teachers refused to be interviewed alone, and (2) two teachers were often free at the same time (Malaysian primary teachers teach according to subjects and not according to class. Thus it is not uncommon for several teachers to be free at the same time since other subject teachers are teaching their classes).

All teachers interviewed were tape recorded with their permission, in Bahasa Malaysia. The interview session lasted approximately one hour on average for one-to-one interviews and one and a half hours for paired interviews. It was assumed for the purpose of interview that:

(1) respondents did not withhold any information concerning their attitudes to IE because of the tape-recordings and, (2) for the interview sessions that involved two respondents simultaneously, their personal attitudes to IE were not influenced by each others' comments on issues raised during the discussions. But it has to be admitted that in some way, direct or indirect, consciously or unconsciously, respondents could have been influenced. Table 17 shows the number of teachers interviewed and their professional status.

Table 17 : Number of primary teachers interviewed based on professional status	
Teachers' professional status	Number
RMCTs	44
Headteachers	3
SETs teaching children with	
i. HI	7
ii. VI	7
iii. LD	10
RETs	6
Total	77

Only three headteachers were interviewed in the six mainstream schools. Three other headteachers were not available for interview because of their work commitments, since during the time of the interviews all schools in Melaka were fully involved in the state schools' co-curriculum activities.

Regarding SETs, two of those interviewed who were teaching children with HI and VI had never attended in-service training courses in special education organized by the Ministry of

Education or the State Education Department. In contrast, all of the SET's interviewed who were teaching children with LD had attended in-services course training in either remedial education or special education specialising in the teaching of children with learning problems (see section 3.2.6). All RET's interviewed had attended relevant in-service training.

As for RMCTs, table 18 sets out the characteristics of the 43 teachers interviewed:.

Table 18: Background characteristics of 43 RMCTs		
Sex	Male	22
	Female	21
Grade level taught	Phase 1 primary	21
	Phase 2 primary	18
	Phase 1 and 2 primary	4
Attended in-service SEN courses	Yes	1
	No	42
Types of in-services SEN courses attended	HI	1
Professional contact with children with SEN	Yes	33
	No	10

Table 18: Background characteristics of 43 RMCTs		
Number of years teaching	Under 5 years	11
	6 to 10 years	9

	11 to 15 years	5
	16 to 20 years	10
	more than 21 years	8
With experience of having children with SEN in the class	Yes	4
	No	39

Only one RMCT had attended an in-service course in special education. Prior to being promoted as second senior assistant to a mainstream primary school, he was a SET for children with HI. Of all the RMCTs who had children with SEN in their classes, only four were available to be interviewed. All four were from mainstream schools with SECs for children with LD. None of RMCTs involved with the placement of children with VI in mainstream classes could be interviewed.

This chapter presents the statistical analysis of responses to the Primary School Teachers' Attitudes questionnaire and examines in depth the main emergent findings.

Statement of results 1

The results of data analysis for descriptive statistics on teachers' attitudes towards inclusive education (IE) were presented as tables in Chapter 7. These tables consisted of composite mean scores (CMS) and standard deviations, frequency, and percentage scores. The tables were constructed:

- (1) for general attitudinal scores, individual sections A, B and C, and the four sub-scales of the attitudinal scales (see section 6.2.6.1). Teachers' CMS were categorized into group 1, group 2, and group 3 (see section 6.2.6.3). Frequency counts in the tables show the number of teachers whose CMS lies within each group (e.g. see table 19).
- (2) for results obtained by using a single item of the attitudinal scales. Teachers were also categorized into three groups: Strongly Disagreed/Disagreed, Undecided, and Agreed. Frequency counts in these tables also indicate the number of teachers who fell into one of the three categories based on their responses to the items (e.g. see table 26). Percentage scores for each group were calculated using the following formula;

$$\text{Percentage} = \frac{\text{Frequency count of one group}}{\text{Total frequency (all three groups)}}.$$

A similar method was also used to calculate the percentage scores for tables representing results for single items. The tables also include the values of each category of CMS standard deviations. Differences in primary teacher attitudes or perceptions towards the issues being discussed are interpreted as being relatively high for this study if the standard deviations are greater than 1.00.

Three statistical tests were used to compare teacher attitudes towards IE. These tests were: (a) independent t-test, (b) one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA), and (c) multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA).

The **independent t-test** was used to compare one dependent variable with one independent variable consisting of two groups or sets of primary teachers.

The one -way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to compare one dependent variable with one independent variable consisting of three or more groups or sets of primary teachers. If tests were statistically significant at the 0.05 level ($p \leq 0.05$), the post-hoc Tukey-HSD test was used to determine group mean differences.

The **multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA)** was used to compare two or more dependent variables with one independent variable. Multivariate 'main effect ' statistics were calculated using **WILKS' Lambda ($W\lambda$)**, and the statistical significance level for the 'main effect' chosen was 0.05 ($p < 0.05$). For significant multivariate 'main effect', results of univariate f- tests were used to identify the dependent variable/s that were responsible for producing the 'main effect'. If the affected independent variable/s consisted of three or more groups or sets of primary teachers, ANOVA followed by post-hoc Tukey-HSD was used to determine group mean differences.

The statistical test used for relationship was the bivariate Pearson Correlation.

7.1 General attitudes of RMCTs towards the proposal to introduce IE into Malaysian mainstream primary schools.

Table 19: CM, frequency and percentage scores for RMCTs' general attitudes to IE

		Grouping/Frequency/Percentage					
		Group 1		Group 2		Group 3	
	CMS	f	%	f	%	f	%
General attitudes	2.44 ± 0.39	279	66.9	134	32.1	4	1.0

Table 19 shows that generally RMCTs involved in the survey have broadly negative attitudes towards the proposed introduction of IE into Malaysian mainstream primary schools. The relatively small value of the standard deviation indicates that there are few differences in RMCTs' attitudes to IE. The percentage of RMCTs with negative general attitudes (66.9 %) is almost twice as large as those with non-committal attitudes (32.1 %). Only 1.0 % of RMCTs exhibit positive attitudes to IE.

7.2 Influence of RMCTs' background characteristics (independent variables) on general attitudes to IE

The results of statistical tests indicated that there were no significant differences on RMCTs' general attitudes towards IE for the independent variables of: (1) sex { $F(4,12) = 0.93, p > 0.05$ }, (2) grade level taught { $F(2,404) = 0.34, p > 0.05$ }, (3) number of years teaching { $F(4,412) = 0.75, p > 0.05$ }, (4) types of qualified SETs in the schools { $F(1,73) = 1.75, p > 0.05$ }, (5) types of children with SEN in contact with at the professional level { $F(2, 172) = 2.27, p > 0.05$, and (6) schools with SECs tried placement { $F(80.29) = 1.35, p > 0.05$ }.

Statistically, there were significant differences in RMCTs' general attitudes to IE for the independent variables of: (1) attendance of qualified SETs in the school { $F(4,15) = 2.10, p < 0.05$ }, and (2) contact with children with SEN at the professional level

{F(415) = 2.10, p < 0.05}.

Identical data were obtained for the two independent variables of attendance of qualified SETs in the school and contact with children with SEN at the professional level. Since there were no ordinary mainstream primary schools in the study that were immediate neighbours to a special education primary school, the same set of RMCTs was involved in data analysis for the two independent variables concerned.

Table 20 : CMS, frequency and percentage scores for general attitudes based on RMCTs' background characteristics (independent variables).

CMS	Grouping/Frequency/Percentage					
	Group 1		Group 2		Group 3	
	f	%	f	%	f	%

20 a: Sex

Male	2.47 ±0.41	74	61.7	45	37.5	1	0.8
Female	2.43 ± 0.39	202	68.7	89	30.3	3	1.30

Table 20 : CMS, frequency and percentage scores for general attitudes based on RMCTs' background characteristics (independent variables).

CMS	Grouping/Frequency/Percentage					
	Group 1		Group 2		Group 3	
	f	%	f	%	f	%

20b : Grade level taught

Phase 1 primary	2.44 ± 0.37	98	68.8	50	33.6	1	0.7
Phase 2 primary	2.43 ± 0.41	139	68.5	62	30.5	2	1.0
Phase 1 and 2 primary	2.48 ± 0.39	34	61.8	20	36.4	3	1.8

20c : Number of years teaching

Under 5 years	2.49 ± 0.42	48	57.8	34	41.0	1	1.2
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6 to 10 years	2.41 ± 0.37	70	66.0	35	33.0	1	0.9
11 to 15 years	2.46 ± 0.45	38	65.5	19	32.8	1	1.7
16 to 20 years	2.40 ± 0.36	64	75.3	20	23.5	1	1.2
More than 20 years	2.45 ± 0.37	59	69.4	26	30.6	0	0.0

20d : Attendance of qualified SETs in school

yes	2.49 ± 0.41	107	61.1	65	37.1	3	1.7
no	2.41 ± 0.38	172	71.1	69	28.5	1	0.4

20e : Type of qualified SE teachers in school

VI	2.69 ± 0.47	6	37.5	9	56.3	1	6.2
LD	2.47 ± 0.40	101	63.5	56	35.2	2	1.3

20f : Contact with children with SEN at the professional level

yes	2.49 ± 0.41	107	61.1	65	37.1	3	1.7
no	2.41 ± 0.38	172	71.1	69	28.5	1	0.4

20g : Type of qualified SE teachers in school

LD	2.46 ± 0.42	81	63.8	44	34.6	2	1.6
HI and VI	2.69 ± 0.47	6	37.5	9	56.3	1	6.3
HI and LD	2.48 ± 0.29	20	62.5	12	37.5	0	0.0

20i : School with SECs tried placement

yes	2.56 ± 0.48	28	53.8	21	40.4	3	5.8
no	2.46 ± 0.39	79	64.2	44	35.8	0	0.0

RMCTs' CMS showed that for all groups of independent variables of: (1) sex (Table 20a), (2) grade level taught (table 20b), (3) number of years teaching (table 20c), (4) attendance of qualified SETs in the school (Table 20d), (5) contact with children with SEN at the professional level (Table 20e), and (6) school with SECs tried placement (Table 20i) they have negative general attitudes towards IE. However, RMCTs with contact with children with SEN at the professional level have significantly fewer negative general attitudes to IE compared to those without such contact. In this respect they are much closer in attitudes to the SETs than to fellow RMCTs without direct experience of SEN.

RMCTs CMS (Table 20i) also shows that RMCTs with professional contact with children with SEN in mainstream schools which had tried placement were less negative in their

general attitudes to IE compared to those without experience, but the difference in their CMS was not statistically significant.

For the independent variable of types of qualified SETs in school (Table 20e), RMCTs in the schools with qualified SETs for children with LD have a negative general attitude to IE, and RMCTs in the one school with qualified SETs for children with VI have a slightly non-committal general attitude to IE. As for the independent variable of types of children with SEN in contact with at the professional level (Table 20g), RMCTs who were in contact with children with LD, and also those in contact with children with HI and LD had a negative attitude to IE. But RMCTs who were in contact with children with HI and VI have slightly non-committal general attitude to IE. Statistically, there are no significant differences in general attitude amongst groups of RMCTs for the two independent variables mentioned.

7.3 Primary teachers' cognitive component of attitudes to IE

7.3.1 General cognitive component

The result of statistical tests shows that there were no significant differences in the perception of RMCTs' general cognitive component for the independent variable of professional status of primary teachers $\{F(3,526) = 2.47, p > 0.05\}$.

Table 21: CMS, frequency and percentage scores of general cognitive component of attitude to IE

	CMS	Group/Frequency/Percentage					
		Group 1		Group 2		Group 3	
		f	%	f	%	f	%
RMCTs' perceived general cognitive component of attitude	2.39 ± 0.52	280	67.1	124	29.7	13	3.1

Perception of RMCTs general cognitive by :

Head teachers	2.21 ± 0.32	11	91.7	1	8.3	0	0.0
SETs	2.28 ± 0.57	62	72.1	22	25.6	2	2.3
RETs	2.12 ± 0.41	13	86.7	2	13.3	0	0.0

CMS data (Table 21) show that RMCTs have a low (negative) perception of their general cognitive component of attitude towards IE. Percentage scores indicate that only 3.1% of RMCTs have a positive perception of their general cognitive component to IE, 29.7% are unsure, and 67.1% are negative.

The other three groups of primary school teachers also have a low perception of RMCTs' general cognitive component of attitude. CMS shows that RMCTs have a relatively higher perception of their own general cognitive component of attitude compared to the other three groups of primary teachers, but this difference of perception was not significant statistically. Standard deviations show that there are few differences of perception as regards RMCTs' general cognitive component within groups of primary teachers.

7.3.2 Perceived knowledge of IE (K1) and perceived ability to teach children with SEN (K2)

7.3.2.1 Influence of primary teachers' professional status on the dependent variable K1 and K2

Multivariate tests showed that there were significant main effects for the independent variable of professional status $\{W\lambda = 0.88, F(6, 1050) = 12.02, p < 0.05\}$ for the dependent variables K1 and K2. Univariate F-tests showed that both K1 $\{F(3, 526) = 12.98, p < 0.05\}$ and K2 $\{F(3, 526, p < 0.05\}$ were affected. Post-hoc tests indicated that for K1, the mean differences were significant only between RMCTs and SETs. For K2, the mean differences were significant between SETs with two other groups of primary teachers (1) RMCTs, and (2) RETs.

Table 22: CMS, frequency and percentage score for K1

	CMS	Group/Frequency/Percentage					
		Group 1		Group 2		Group 3	
		f	%	f	%	f	%
RMCTs	2.84 ± 0.59	111	26.7	217	52.0	89	21.3

Perception of RMCTs K1 by;

Head teachers	2.61 ± 0.47	6	50.0	5	41.7	1	8.3
SETs	2.41 ± 0.59	45	52.3	38	44.2	3	3.5
RETs	2.65 ± 0.58	5	33.3	9	60.0	1	6.7

CMS data (Table 22) show that generally RMCTs have mixed perceptions of their knowledge of IE (K1). Percentage data indicate that 26.7% of RMCTs perceive themselves as having low (negative) knowledge of IE, 21.3% perceive themselves as having high (positive) knowledge of IE, while 52.0% are uncertain.

CMS also shows head teachers and RETs are slightly unsure (almost negative) about their perceptions of RMCTs' knowledge of IE. The differences of opinion between RMCTs' knowledge of IE are significant statistically. RMCTs considered themselves as having higher knowledge of IE compared to the ratings accorded to them by SETs. There are no significant differences in perceptions between head teachers, SETs and RETs about RMCTs' knowledge of IE.

Table 23: CMS, frequency and percentage scores for K2

	CMS	Grouping/Frequency/Percentage					
		Group 1		Group 2		Group 3	
		f	%	f	%	f	%
RMCTs	1.83 ± 0.72	348	63.5	58	13.9	11	2.6

Perception of RMCTs' K2 by:

Headteachers	1.71 ± 0.38	12	100	0	0.0	0	0.0
SETs	2.12 ± 0.82	65	75.6	12	14.0	9	10.5
RETs	1.45 ± 0.39	15	100	0	0.0	0	0.0

CMS (Table 23) shows that RMCTs have a very low perception of their ability to teach children with SEN (K2). Only 2.6% of RMCTs consider themselves as being capable of teaching these children, while 13.9% are unsure.

The CMS data also show that headteachers, SETs and RETs too have a low perception of RMCTs' ability to teach children with SEN. There were statistically significant differences in perceptions between SETs and RETs of RMCT's' ability to teach these children. SETs are significantly more positive in their perception of RMCTs' ability to teach children with SEN compared to that of RETs. SETs also have a significantly more positive perception of RMCTs' ability to teach children with SEN compared to RMCTs' perception of themselves.

7.3.2.2 Influence of RMCTs' background (independent variables) on (1) contact with children with SEN at the professional level, (2) types of children with SEN in contact with at the professional level, and (3) schools with SECs tried placement, on K1 and K2

Multivariate tests showed there were no statistically significant main effects for RMCTs' background characteristics of types of children with SEN in contact with at the professional level $\{W\lambda = 0.95, F(4,342) = 2.12, p > 0.05\}$, but that there was a statistically significant relationship between the background characteristics of both:

(1) contact with children with SEN at the professional level $\{W\lambda = 0.98, F(2,414) = 4.24, p < 0.05\}$, and (2) schools with SECs tried placement $\{W\lambda = 0.97, F(2,172) = 3.02, p < 0.05\}$ for the dependent variables, K1 and K2.

The post-hoc univariate F-test showed that K1 $\{F(1,415) = 8.09, p < 0.05\}$ differed across the two groups of RMCTs for the independent variable, in contact with children with SEN at the professional level, but not on K2 $\{F(1,173) = 0.18, p = 0.05\}$.

Post-hoc univariate F-test also indicated that K2 $\{F(1,173) = 5.97, p < 0.05\}$ differed across the two groups of RMCTs, for the independent variable of schools with SECs tried placement, but not on K1 $\{F(1,173) = 0.18, p > 0.05\}$.

Table 24: CMS, frequency and percentage scores for K1

CMS	Grouping/Frequency/Percentage					
	Group 1		Group 2		Group 3	
	f	%	f	%	f	%

24a. Contact with children with SEN at the professional level

yes	2.94 ± 0.60	41	23.4	85	48.6	49	28.0
no	2.77 ± 0.58	70	28.9	132	54.5	40	16.5

24b. Types of children with SEN in contact with at the professional level

LD	2.92 ± 0.50	30	23.6	61	48.0	36	28.3
HI and VI	2.99 ± 0.68	4	25.0	8	50.0	4	25.0
HI and LD	2.99 ± 0.58	7	21.9	16	50.0	9	28.1

24c. Schools with SECs tried placement

yes	2.97 ± 0.62	11	21.1	27	51.9	14	26.9
no	2.92 ± 0.59	30	23.4	85	48.6	49	28.0

Statistical tests show that RMCTs who had contact with children with SEN at the professional level have a significantly more favorable perception of K1 compared to those without such contact. There is no statistically difference between RMCTs' perception of K1, for the two independent variables (1) types of children with SEN in contact with at the professional level, and (2) schools with SECs tried placement. CMS (Table 24a, b, c) shows that RMCTs for all groups of the three independent variables mentioned have generally a non-committal perception of K1.

Table 25: CMS, frequency and percentage scores for K2

CMS	Grouping/Frequency/Percentage						
	Group 1		Group 2		Group 3		
	f	%	f	%	f	%	
25a. Contact with children SEN at the professional level							
Yes	1.84 ± 0.73	146	83.4	24	13.8	5	2.8
No	1.82 ± 0.72	202	83.5	34	14.0	6	2.5
25b. Types of children with SEN in contact with at the professional level							
LD	1.84 ± 0.75	105	82.7	18	14.2	4	3.1
HI and VI	2.25 ± 0.78	10	62.5	6	37.5	0	0.0
HI and LD	1.64 ± 0.56	31	96.9	0	0.0	1	3.1
25c. Schools with SECs tried placement							
Yes	2.04 ± 0.83	39	75.0	9	17.3	4	7.7
No	1.75 ± 0.67	107	87.0	15	12.2	1	0.8

Statistically, there are no differences in RMCTs' perception of K2 for the independent variables (1) contact with children with SEN at the professional level, and (2) types of children in contact with at the professional level. But RMCTs in schools with SECs that tried placement have a significantly less negative perception of K2 compared to those in schools that had never tried placement. CMS data (Table 25a, b, c) also show that generally RMCTs for all groups of the three independent variables mentioned have negative perceptions of K2.

7.3.3 Response to an item in section A of PSTA attitudinal scale

Item 2: “Regular teachers are well versed in the concept of a caring society”

Statistical analysis shows that there was a significant mean difference for item 2 {F (3, 526) = 42.79, $p < 0.05$ } across primary teachers’ professional status. Post-hoc tests show that differences occur between (1) headteachers and SETs; and between (2) RMCTs with both SETs and RETs.

Table 26 : CMS, frequency and percentage scores for item 2.

		Grouping/Frequency/Percentage					
		S/Disagreed		Undecided		S/Agreed	
	CMS	f	%	f	%	f	%
RMCTs	4.41 ± 0.755	12	2.9	50	12.0	353	85.1

Perception of RMCTs’ item 2 by:

Headteachers	4.00 ± 0.755	1	8.3	2	16.7	9	74.7
SETs	3.10 ± 0.88	21	24.4	34	39.5	31	36.0
RETs	3.53 ± 0.99	3	20.0	3	20.0	9	60.0

CMS (Table 26) shows that RMCTs perceive themselves as having high (positive) understanding of the concept of the ‘caring society’. Only 2.9% of RMCTs have a low (negative) perception of their understanding, with 12.0% undecided.

The CMS of Headteachers and RETs show that they have high perception of RMCTs’ understanding of the caring society concept, while SETs are non-committal. Headteachers have significantly more positive perception of RMCTs’ understanding about the caring society concept compared to SETs. Statistically significant differences of perception also occur between RMCTs with both SETs and RETs. RMCTs have a higher perception of their understanding of the ‘caring society concept, compared to those accorded to them by both SETs and RETs.

7.4 Primary teachers' affective component of attitudes

7.4.1 General affective component

Statistical analysis showed there were significant differences as regards the affective component of attitudes for the independent variable of professional status { $F(3,526) = 26.34$ $p < 0.05$ }. The post-hoc test indicated that significant differences in the general affective component occur between RMCTs and the other three groups of primary teachers. There was no statistically significant difference in the general affective component between headteachers, SETs and RETs.

Table 27 : CMS, frequency and percentage scores of general affective to IE.

		Grouping/Frequency/Percentage					
		Group 1		Group 2		Group 3	
	CMS	f	%	f	%	f	%
RMCTs	$2.37 \pm 0.4.7$	295	70.7	111	26.6	11	2.6
Headteachers	$2.8. \pm 0.56$	7	58.3	3	25.0	2	16.7
SETs	2.84 ± 0.59	32	37.2	35	40.7	19	22.1
RETs	2.91 ± 0.70	5	33.3	6	40.0	4	27.7

CMS (Table 27) show that RMCTs have a negative general affective component of attitudes. Percentage scores indicate that only 2.6% of RMCTs have a positive general affective component, with 26.6% undecided. All the other three groups of primary teachers have a non-committal general affective component towards the placement of children with SEN in mainstream classes. Statistically, RMCTs have significantly more negative general affective component to IE, compared to headteachers, SETs and RETs.

7.4.2 Perceived benefit of IE to children with SEN (F1), and perceived suitability of the National Primary Schools' Curriculum (KBSR) for children with SEN

7.4.2.1 Influence of primary teacher's professional status on the dependent variables

F1 and F2

Multivariate tests indicated that there were statistically significant main effects between the independent variable professional status [$WX = 0.93$, $F(6, 1050) = 6.09$, $p < 0.05$] for the dependent variables F 1 and F2. Univariate F-tests showed that both F 1 $1VF(3, 526) = 10.01$, $p < 0.05$ and F2 $>F(3, 526) = 4.56$, $p < 0.05$ were affected. Post-hoc tests showed that for F 1, mean differences were statistically significant between RMCTs with both SETs and RETs. For F2 mean differences were significant between RMCTs and SETs.

Table 28 : CMS, frequency and percentage scores for F1

		Group/Frequency/Percentage					
		Group 1		Group 2		Group 3	
	CMS	f	%	f	%	f	%
RMCTs	2.59 ± 0.77	186	44.6	192	46.6	39	9.4
Head teachers	2.97 ± 0.72	3	25.0	8	66.7	1	8.3
SETs	3.01 ± 0.84	27	31.4	29	33.7	30	34.9
RETs	3.27 ± 1.00	3	20.0	6	40.0	6	40.0

CMS (Table 28) shows that RMCTs have a slightly negative perception of the benefit of IE to children with SEN. Only 9.4% of RMCTs have a positive perception about this, with an approximately equal percentage of RMCTs who are either undecided or have negative perception. Headteachers, SETs and RETs are non-committal in their perception of the benefit of IE to children with SEN. SETs and RETs have significantly more favourable perceptions of the benefit of IE to children with SEN compared to RMCTs. Standard deviation scores show that there was a relatively high difference of perceptions about the benefit of IE amongst RETs compared to the other three groups of primary teachers.

Table 29: CMS, frequency and percentage scores for F2

	CMS	Group/Frequency/Percentage					
		Group 1		Group 2		Group 3	
		f	%	f	%	f	%
RMCTs	2.61 ± 0.79	176	42.7	190	45.6	49	11.8
Head teachers	3.03 ± 0.83	3	25.0	6	50.0	3	25.0
SETs	2.93 ± 0.69	24	27.9	52	60.5	10	11.6
RETs	2.73 ± 0.84	3	40.0	6	40.0	3	20.0

CMS (Table 29) shows that RMCTs were slightly non-committal in their perceptions of the suitability of KBSR for children with SEN. Of these 42.7% have negative perceptions about its suitability, 45.6% were undecided, and only 11.8% were positive about it. Headteachers, SETs and RETs are non-committal in their perceptions of KBSR suitability. SETs have a more positive perception of the suitability of KBSR compared to RMCTs. The differences of perception between these two groups of primary teachers are significant statistically.

7.4.2.2 Influence of RMCTs' background characteristics (independent variables) in terms of: (1) contact with children with SEN at the professional level, (2) types of children with SEN in contact with at the professional level, and (3) schools with SECs tried placement, on F1 and F2.

Multivariate tests showed that there were no statistically significant effects by the three independent variables, namely RMCTs' experience of:

(1) professional contact with children with SEN at the professional level {WX = 0.99, F(2, 414) = 2.50, $p > 0.05$ }

(2) types of children with SEN in contact with at the professional level (WX = 0.99, F(4, 340) = 0.90, $p > 0.05$)

(3) schools with SECs tried placement {WX = 0.98, F(2, 172) = 1.67, $p > 0.05$ }
upon the dependent variables, F1 and F2.

Table 30: CMS, frequency and percentage scores for F 1

		Grouping/Frequency/Percentage					
		Group 1		Group 2		Group 3	
		F	%	f	%	f	%
CMS							
30a. Contact with children with SEN at the professional level							
yes	2.64 ± 0.80	71	40.6	88	50.3	16	9.1
no	2.56 ± 0.75	115	47.5	104	43.0	23	9.5
30b. Types of children with SEN in contact with at the professional level							
LD	2.59 ± 0.85	54	42.5	61	48.0	12	9.4
HI and VI	2.83 ± 0.85	6	37.5	7	43.8	3	18.8
HI and LD	2.75 ± 0.49	11	34.4	20	62.5	1	3.1
30c. Schools with SECs tried placement							
yes	2.65 ± 0.92	21	40.4	24	46.2	7	13.5
no	2.64 ± 0.74	50	40.7	64	52.0	9	7.3

There were no statistically significant differences in RMCTs' perceptions of F1 for all groups of RMCTs for the three independent variables mentioned.

The CMS results (Table 30 a, b, c), indicate that RMCTs are either slightly negative or slightly non-committal about the benefit of IE to children with SEN.

Table 31: CMS, frequency and percentage scores for F2

		Grouping/Frequency/Percentage					
		Group 1		Group 2		Group 3	
		F	%	f	%	f	%
CMS							
31a. Contact with children with SEN at the professional level							
yes	2.72 ± 0.80	67	38.3	81	46.3	27	15.4
no	2.55 ± 0.78	11.1	45.9	109	45.0	22	9.1
31b. Types of children with SEN in contact with at the professional level							
LD	2.67 ± 0.83	54	42.5	53	41.7	20	15.7
HI and VI	2.71 ± 0.81	6	37.5	8	50.0	2	12.5
HI and LD	2.90 ± 0.62	7	21.9	20	62.5	3	15.6

31c. Schools with SECs tried placement

yes	2.89 ± 0.83	17	32.7	25	48.1	10	19.2
no	2.65 ± 0.78	50	40.7	56	45.4	17	13.8

There is also no difference in RMCTs' perception of F2 across all groups of RMCTs for the three independent variables. CMS (Table 31a, b, c) shows that RMCTs who have contact with children with SEN at the professional level have a non-committal perception of F2, and those without such contact are slightly negative in their perception. All groups of RMCTs for the other two independent variables are noncommittal in their perception of the suitability of the ICBSR for children with-SEN.

7.4.3 Response to items in section B of PSTA attitudinal scale

For this part of the findings, all negative worded items were changed to positive wording (see section 7.2.6). Items marked * were originally negatively worded items.

7.4.3.1 Item 10: Right of children with SEN to be educated in mainstream classes

Item 10: "Children with disabilities have the right to be in a regular classroom".

Statistical tests showed there were significant differences in perception for item 10 for the independent variable of professional status ($F(3, 526) = 14.45, p < 0.05$). Post-hoc tests showed that difference occurs between both SETs and RETs with RMCTs.

Table 32: CMS, frequency and percentage scores for item 10

	CMS	Group/Frequency/Percentage					
		S/Disagreed		Undecided		S/Agreed	
		f	%	f	%	f	%
RMCTs	2.61 ± 1.16	232	55.6	70	16.8	11.5	27.6
Head teachers	3.37 ± 1.45	4	33.3	1	8.3	7	58.3
SETs	3.35 ± 1.34	26	30.2	15	17.4	45	52.3
RETs	3.80 ± 1.01	2	13.3	3	20.0	10	46.7

RMCTs (CMS-Table 32) were slightly non-committal on the issue of the right of children with SEN to be educated in mainstream classes. Of the RMCTs 45.6% felt that children with SEN do not have the right to be educated in mainstream classes, 16.8% were undecided, and 27.6% felt these children do have the right. Headteachers and SETs have a mainly positive perception of the right of children with SEN to be educated in mainstream classes, with RETs having almost as positive a perception of these rights. RMCTs have the most negative perception about this, and RETs are much more favourable than the RMCTs. Statistically significant differences in perceptions occurred between RMCTs and both SETs and RETs.

7.4.3.2 Items 18, 19 and 20: Benefit of IE to children with SEN

Multivariate tests showed that there were statistically significant effects by the independent variable of professional status {WX - 0.92, $F(9, 1275) = 5.21$, $p < 0.05$ } upon the dependent variables, in relation to items 18, 19, 20. Univariate F-tests showed that item 19 { $F(3, 526) = 7.19$, $p < 0.05$ } and item 20 { $F(3, 526) = 13.03$, $p < 0.05$ } were both affected, but not item 18 { $F(3, 526) = 1.42$, $p > 0.05$ }. Post-hoc tests showed that for item 19, differences in perception occur between RMCTs and SETs. For item 20, differences were between both SETs and RETs with RMCTs.

Item 18: "Children with disabilities would gain more academically by being educated in a regular classroom".

Table 33: CMS, frequency and percentage scores for item 18

	CMS	Group/Frequency/Percentage					
		S/Disagreed		Undecided		S/Agreed	
		f	%	f	%	f	%
RMCTs	2.34 ± 0.93	232	53.7	159	38.1	35	8.4
Head teachers	2.67 ± 0.98	4	33.4	6	50.0	2	16.7
SETs	2.45 ± 1.16	46	53.6	23	26.7	17	19.8
RETs	2.73 ± 1.03	2	40.0	5	33.3	4	26.7

CMS (Table 33) shows that RMCTs have negative perception of the academic benefit of IE to children with SEN. Of these 53.7% felt that IE would not academically benefit children with SEN, 38.1% were unsure, and only 8.4 % felt these children would benefit. SETs too have negative perception for item 18. Headteachers have a slightly non-committal perception, and RETs have a non-committal perception.

Item 19: “The emotional development of children with disabilities would be improved when included in regular classroom”*

Table 34: CMS, frequency and percentage scores for item 19

	CMS	Group/Frequency/Percentage					
		S/Disagreed		Undecided		S/Agreed	
		f	%	f	%	F	%
RMCTs	2.53 ± 1.00	203	48.7	147	35.3	67	16.1
Head teachers	2.83 ± 1.11	6	50.0	4	33.3	2	16.7
SETs	3.01 ± 1.06	31	36.1	21	24.4	34	39.6
RETs	3.20 ± 1.21	4	26.6	3	20.0	8	53.4

RMCTs (CMS - Table 34) have an almost non-committal perception of the benefit of IE for the emotional development of children with SEN. Of these 48.7% felt it would not benefit these children's emotional development, 35.3% were unsure and 16.1% felt it would benefit them. Headteachers, SETs and RETs have a non-committal perception for item 19. Statistically SETs are significantly more positives in their perception for item 19 compared to

RMCTs. Standard deviation scores indicate that there is a relatively high difference of perception between all four groups of primary teachers.

Item 20: “Children with disabilities would be able to learn more appropriate social skills if taught in a regular classroom”.

Table 35 : CMS, frequency and percentage scores for item 20

	CMS	Group/Frequency/Percentage					
		S/Disagreed		Undecided		S/Agreed	
		f	%	f	%	f	%
RMCTs	2.90 ± 1.03	151	36.2	130	31.2	136	32.6
Head teachers	3.42 ± 0.90	2	16.7	4	33.3	6	50.0
SETs	3.57 ± 1.10	16	18.7	18	20.9	52	60.5
RETs	3.87 ± 1.06	1	6.7	3	20.0	11	73.3

CMS (Table 35) shows that RMCTs were generally unsure of the benefit of IE to the development of social skills in children with SEN. Of the RMCTs 32.6% were positive that the social skills of these children would be developed appropriately, 31.2 % were unsure, and 36.2% were negative. For the other three groups of primary teachers CMS show that they have positive perceptions of item 20. Statistically, both SETs and RETs have significantly more positive perceptions of item 20 compared to RMCTs. Again, standard deviation scores show that the difference in teachers’ perceptions of the ability of children with SEN to develop appropriate social skills as the result of IE was relatively marked, with SETs and RETs on the one hand being favourable, while RMCTs on the other hand were less so.

7.4.3.3 Item 14 and 21: Effect of IE on mainstream children's education

Multivariate tests showed there were statistically significant main effects for the independent variable of professional status {WX = 0.93, F(6, 1050) = 6.18, p < 0.05} in relation to the dependent variables, item 14 and 21. However univariate F-tests showed that only item 21 {F(3, 526) = 11.38, p < 0.05} was affected, not item 14 {F(3, 526) = 0.92, p > 0.05}. Post-hoc tests showed that for item 21, a difference occurred between RMCTs and SETs.

Item 14: Exposure to children with disabilities will encourage normal children to be more caring towards disabled person.*

Table 36 : CMS, frequency and percentage scores for item 14

		Group/Frequency/Percentage					
		Group 1		Group 2		Group 3	
	CMS	f	%	f	%	f	%
RMCTs	3.48 ± 1.11	82	19.7	101	24.4	234	56.1
Head teachers	4.00 ± 0.85	1	8.3	1	8.3	10	83.3
SETs	3.56 ± 1.21	17	19.7	18	20.9	51	59.3
RETs	3.47 ± 0.99	2	13.3	7	46.7	6	40.0

CMS (Table 36) shows all four groups of primary teachers are positive that IE will make mainstream children more caring towards persons with disabilities. Percentage scores indicate that 56.1% of RMCTs have a positive perception that mainstream children will be more caring, 24.2% were undecided and 19.7% have negative perception. Headteachers are the most positive while RETs are least positive. . Standard deviation scores show that within the groups of RMCTs and SETs there is a relatively high difference in perception of IE making mainstream children more caring towards persons with disabilities.

Item 21: The academic achievement of normal children would not be negatively affected if taught together with children with disabilities.*

Table 37 : CMS, frequency and percentage scores for item 21

		Grouping/Frequency/Percentage					
		S/Disagreed		Undecided		S/Agreed	
	CMS	f	%	f	%	f	%
RMCTs	2.84 ± 1.16	174	41.7	109	26.1	134	32.1
Headteachers	3.50 ± 1.09	3	25.0	2	16.7	7	58.4

SETs	3.58 ± 1.19	18	20.9	17	19.8	51	59.3
RETs	3.60 ± 1.12	2	13.4	4	26.7	9	60.0

RMCTs were undecided (CMS Table 37) about whether or not IE would negatively affect mainstream children's academic achievement. Of these 41.7% felt it would have a negative effect, 26.1% were undecided, and 32.1% felt it would not have such an effect. Headteachers, SETs and RETs perceive that IE would not affect mainstream children's academic achievement. Within all four groups of primary teachers there was a relatively high difference in perception on item 21 in terms of standard deviation scores. Statistically, RMCTs have a significantly less positive perception compared to SETs.

7.4.3.4 Items 23 and 31: teacher workload and teaching responsibilities.

Multivariate tests showed that there were statistically significant main effects for the independent variable of professional status $\{W^{\wedge} = 0.92, F(6, 1050) = 7.10, p < 0.05\}$ for the dependent variables, item 23 and 31. Univariate F-tests showed that both item 23 $\{F(3, 526) = 12.35, p < 0.05\}$ and item 31 $\{F(3, 526) = 12.35, p < 0.05\}$ were affected. Post-hoc tests indicated that differences occur between both SETs and RETs with RMCTs for item 23 and between SETs and RMCTs for item 31.

Item 23: Including children with disabilities would not increase the regular teacher's teaching workload.*

Table 38 : CMS, frequency and percentage scores for item 23.

	CMS	Grouping/Frequency/Percentage					
		S/Disagreed		Undecided		S/Agreed	
		f	%	f	%	f	%
RMCTs	1.85 ± 0.89	350	83.9	38	9.1	29	7.0
Headteachers	2.17 ± 1.11	8	66.6	2	16.7	2	16.7
SETs	2.49 ± 1.21	54	62.8	9	10.5	26	26.7
RETs	2.53 ± 1.30	8	53.4	3	20.0	4	26.7

CMS (Table 38) shows that RMCTs perceive that their teaching workload will increase as a result of IE impending implementation. Only 7.0% of RMCTs felt that their workload would not increase, 9.1% were undecided, and 83.9% felt it would increase. The other groups of primary teachers also felt that IE will increase teachers' workload. Statistically both SETs and RETs have a significantly less negative perception for item 23 compared to RMCTs. Standard deviation scores indicate that relative high difference in perception occur between headteachers, SETs and RETs.

Item 31 : Regular teachers have a responsibility in the education of children with disabilities

Table 39 : CMS, frequency and percentage scores for item 31.

	CMS	Grouping/Frequency/Percentage					
		S/Disagreed		Undecided		S/Agreed	
		f	%	f	%	f	%
RMCTs	2.09 ± 0.86	300	71.9	93	22.3	14	5.8
Headteachers	2.41 ± 0.79	9	75.0	1	8.3	2	22.7
SETs	2.51 ± 1.06	49	57.0	18	20.9	19	22.7
RETs	2.20 ± 1.01	11	73.3	3	20.0	1	6.7

CMS (Table 39) shows that RMCTs do not perceive themselves as being responsible for the education of children with SEN. Only 5.8% felt that they do have the responsibility to educate children with SEN, 22.3% were unsure and 71.9% felt they do not have this responsibility. These perceptions of RMCTs were also shared by the other three groups of primary teachers. Statistically SETs' perceptions are significantly less negative compared to RMCTs. Differences in perception of the responsibility of RMCTs for the education of children with SEN are relatively high amongst SETs and RETs based on standard deviation scores.

7.5 Primary teachers' conative component of attitudes to IE.

7.5.1 General conative component

Statistical tests showed that there were significant mean differences in primary teachers' general conative component of attitudes towards IE across professional status {F (3, 526) = 7.93, $p < 0.05$ }. Post-hoc tests showed the difference occurs between RMCTs and SETs.

Table 40 : CMS, frequency and percentage scores for general conative component to IE.

	CMS	Grouping/Frequency/Percentage					
		S/Disagreed		Undecided		S/Agreed	
		f	%	f	%	f	%
RMCTs	2.68 ± 0.54	159	38.1	226	54.2	32	7.7

Perception of RMTs' general conative component by:

Headteachers	2.98 ± 0.41	2	16.7	8	66.7	2	16.7
SETs	2.95 ± 0.47	14	16.3	62	72.1	10	11.6
RETs	3.00 ± 0.54	3	20.0	10	66.7	2	13.3

RMCTs were slightly non-committal (CMS – Table 40) about their general conative components of attitudes towards IE. Only 7.7% of RMCTs perceive themselves to be positive about the general conative component to IE, 54.2% were unsure, and 38.1% perceive themselves to be negative. Headteachers, SETs and RETs too have a non-committal perception of RMCTs' general conative component of attitudes.

7.5.2 Item 32: Willingness to support the implementation of IE

Tests showed there were statistically significant mean differences for the independent variable of professional status {F (3, 526) = 4.96, $p < 0.05$ } in relation to the dependent variable item 32. Post-hoc tests indicated that differences occur between RMCTs with both headteachers and SETs.

Item 32 : Regular teachers will support the idea of including children with disabilities into regular classroom

Table 41 : CMS, frequency and percentage scores for item 32.

	CMS	Grouping/Frequency/Percentage					
		S/Disagreed		Undecided		S/Agreed	
		f	%	f	%	f	%
RMCTs	2.04 ± 0.96	305	73.1	75	18.0	37	8.9

Perception of RMTs for item 32 by;

Headteachers	2.75 ± 0.62	4	33.3	7	58.3	1	2.6
SETs	2.36 ± 0.91	43	50.0	38	44.2	5	5.9
RETs	2.33 ± 0.90	8	53.3	6	40.0	1	6.7

RMCTs have negative perception of their willingness to support the planned placement in mainstream classes of children with SEN (CMS – Table 41). Only 8.9% of RMCT were willing to support IE implementation, 18% were undecided, and 73.1% were reluctant to support it. CMS results show that both SETs and RETs too felt that RMCTs would not support IE implementation while headteachers were non-committal. Both headteachers and SETs have significantly less negative perception of RMCTs' willingness to support IE compared to RMCTs' perception of their own willingness.

7.5.3 Item 35: Willingness to improve relevant teaching skills

Analysis showed no statistically significant difference for the independent variable of professional status {F (3, 526) = 0.128, $p > 0.05$ } for this dependent variable.

Item 35 : Regular teachers will volunteer to attend relevant in-service training in special education if children with disabilities are included in regular classroom.

Table 42 : CMS, frequency and percentage scores for item 35.

		Grouping/Frequency/Percentage					
		S/Disagreed		Undecided		S/Agreed	
	CMS	f	%	f	%	f	%
RMCTs	3.00 ± 1.08	144	34.5	108	25.6	165	39.6

Perception of RMTs for item 35 by;

Headteachers	3.17 ± 0.94	4	33.3	2	16.7	6	50.0
SETs	3.00 ± 1.04	27	31.4	33	38.4	26	30.3
RETs	2.93 ± 1.03	6	40.0	3	20.0	6	40.0

CMS (Table 42) shows all four groups of primary teachers show some agreement that IE will create willingness of RMCTs to voluntarily attend relevant in-service training in special education if IE is implemented in mainstream primary schools. 39.6% of RMCTs state that they were willing to attend the relevant in-service training, 25.9% were unsure, with 34.5% being unwilling to attend. There is no statistically significant difference among the four groups of primary teachers on item 35.

7.5.4 Influence of RMCTs' background characteristics (independent variables) of (1) contact with children with SEN at the professional level, (2) types of children with SEN in contact with at the professional level, and (3) schools with SECs tried placement on item 32 and item 35

Multivariate tests showed that there were no statistically significant main effects for the independent variables, (1) contact with children with SEN at the professional level $\{W\lambda = 0.99, F(2, 414) = 1.20, p > 0.05\}$, (2) types of children with SEN in contact with at the professional level $\{W\lambda = 0.99, F(4, 342) = 0.49, p > 0.05\}$ and (3) schools with SECs tried placement $\{W\lambda = 0.99, F(2, 414) = 1.05, p > 0.05\}$ for the dependent variables, item 32 and 35.

Table 43 : CMS, frequency and percentage scores for item 32

CMS	Grouping/Frequency/Percentage					
	S/Disagreed		Undecided		S/Agreed	
	F	%	f	%	f	%

43a. Contact with children with SEN at the professional level

yes	2.10 ± 0.97	123	70.3	34	19.4	18	10.3
no	1.99 ± 0.96	182	75.2	41	16.9	19	7.9

43b. Types of children with SEN in contact with at the professional level

LD	2.10 ± 1.03	91	71.7	19	15.0	17	13.4
HI and VI	2.38 ± 0.89	8	50.1	7	43.8	1	6.3
HI and LD	2.00 ± 0.72	24	75.0	8	25.0	0	0

43c. Schools with SECs tried placement

yes	2.14 ± 0.86	35	67.3	14	26.9	3	5.8
no	2.09 ± 1.00	88	71.5	20	16.3	15	12.2

There was no difference between all groups of RMCTs for the three independent variables in willingness to support IE. CMS (Table 43a) shows that RMCTs who had contact with children with SEN at the professional level were less negative in their willingness to support IE implementation compared to those without such contact. RMCTs who had contact with the three types of children with SEN were also negative about supporting IE (Table 43b). Low

willingness to support IE was also exhibited by RMCTs in schools with SECs which had tried placement and by those in schools which had never tried it (Table 43c).

Table 44: CMS, frequency and percentage scores for item 35

		Grouping/Frequency/Percentage					
		Group 1		Group 2		Group 3	
CMS		F	%	f	%	f	%
44a. Contact with children with SEN at the professional level							
yes	3.02 ± 1.11	59	33.7	49	28.0	67	53.3
no	2.96 ± 1.04	85	35.1	59	24.4	98	40.5
44b. Types of children with SEN in contact with at the professional							
LD	2.97 ± 1.06	40	31.5	39	30.7	48	37.8
HI and VI	3.13 ± 0.89	3	18.8	7	43.8	6	37.5
HI and LD	2.84 ± 1.05	16	50.1	3	9.4	13	40.6
44c. Schools with SECs tried placement							
yes	3.14 ± 1.12	21	40.4	17	32.7	23	44.3
no	2.89 ± 1.00	47	38.2	32	26.0	44	35.8

Again there was no statistical significant difference among all groups of RMCT in their willingness to attend the relevant in-service training in special education for the three independent variables above: they were non-committal. CMS (Table 44a) shows that RMCTs who had contact with children with SEN at the professional level are slightly in favour of attending training in special education compared to those without such contact. RMCTs in schools with SECs which had tried placement are also slightly more in favour of attending training in special education compared to RMCTs in schools which had never tried it (Table 44c). Standard deviation scores also indicate that there is a relatively high willingness to attend relevant training in special education, except for those with professional contact with children with HI and VI (Table 44b).

7.5.5 Conditions for accepting children with SEN in mainstream classes

Table 45 : CMS, frequency and percentage score for the 6 conditions for accepting IE.

CMS	Grouping/Frequency/Percentage					
	Group 1		Group 2		Group 3	
	f	%	f	%	f	%

45a : RMTs

If directed only	3.21 ± 1.10	105	25.2	119	28.5	193	46.3
Placement of children with SEN without disruptive behaviour	2.98 ± 1.06	148	35.5	104	24.9	165	39.6
If specialist support is available	3.49 ± 1.02	81	19.5	82	19.7	254	61.0
Voluntarily accept IE without change to current teaching conditions	2.16 ± 0.86	297	71.2	88	21.1	32	7.7
If given teaching incentives	2.65 ± 1.04	200	48.0	136	32.6	81	19.4
Accept IE even if it negatively affects annual teaching appraisal	2.37 ± 0.97	262	62.8	90	21.6	65	15.5

45b: Headteachers' perception of RMCTs' conditions for accepting IE

If directed only	3.42 ± 1.08	3	25.0	3	25.0	6	50.0
Placement of children with SEN without disruptive behaviour	3.58 ± 0.79	1	8.3	4	33.3	7	58.3
If specialist support is available	4.00 ± 0.85	1	8.3	1	8.3	10	83.3
Voluntarily accept IE without change to current teaching conditions	2.17 ± 0.72	8	66.7	4	33.3	0	0.0
If given teaching incentives	3.25 ± 0.87	2	16.7	6	50.0	4	33.3
Accept IE even if it negatively affects annual teaching appraisal	2.25 ± 0.87	8	66.7	3	25.0	1	8.3

Table 45: CMS, frequency and percentage score for the 6 conditions for accepting IE.

CMS	Grouping/Frequency/Percentage					
	Group 1		Group 2		Group 3	
	f	%	f	%	f	%

45c: Special education teachers' perception of RMCTs' conditions for accepting IE

If directed only	3.71± 1.05	12	14.0	15	17.4	59	68.6
Placement of children with SEN without disruptive behaviour	3.53± 0.95	11	12.8	29	33.7	46	53.5
If specialist support is available	3.90 ± 1.02	8	8.4	13	15.1	65	75.6
Voluntarily accept IE without change to current teaching conditions	2.50 ± 0.99	42	48.8	29	33.7	15	17.4
If given teaching incentives	3.47 ± 1.06	13	15.2	32	37.2	41	47.7
Accept IE even if it negatively affects annual teaching appraisal	2.53 ± 1.00	40	46.5	33	36.4	13	15.1

45d: Remedial education teachers' perception of RMCTs' conditions for accepting IE

If directed only	3.40 ± 1.06	4	26.7	3	20.0	8	53.3
Placement of children with SEN without disruptive behaviour	3.40 ± 0.99	2	13.4	5	33.3	8	53.3
If specialist support is available	4.13 ± 0.83	1	6.7	1	6.7	13	86.6
Voluntarily accept IE without change to current teaching conditions	2.60 ± 0.74	8	53.3	5	33.3	2	13.4
If given teaching incentives	3.53 ± 1.13	3	20	5	33.3	7	46.7
Accept IE even if it negatively affects annual teaching appraisal	2.47 ± 0.64	7	46.7	8	53.3	0	0.0

CMS (Table 45a) shows that of the six conditions for accepting IE by RMCTs, the highest CMS was for “the availability of relevant specialist support”. This shows that generally RMCTs would be willing to accept the placement of children with SEN if the relevant specialist support is available. Percentage scores show that 61.0% of RMCTs would accept IE with specialist support. CMS also shows that head teachers (Table 45b), SETs (Table 45c) and RETs (Table 45d) also perceive that availability of relevant support services will be the main condition for the acceptance of IE by RMCTs.

CMS for all the other three groups of primary teachers show they have a positive perception that RMCTs would accept IE with specialist support. Standard deviation scores indicate that there was a relatively high difference in perception for this particular condition between RMCTs and SETs.

The second highest CMS for the acceptance of inclusion by RMCTs is if they were directed to do so by the relevant education authorities. CMS indicates that generally RMCTs were undecided if they would accept the placement of children with SEN in their classes, even if they were directed. Of the RMCTs 28.5% were undecided and 25.2% indicated that they would not accept IE even with direction. SETs also listed “if directed only” as second of the six conditions for acceptance of IE by RMCTs, while head teachers, SETs and RETs had a positive perception that RMCTs would accept IE if they are directed to do so. Standard deviation scores show that within all four groups primary teacher differences in perception are relatively high for this condition.

The third condition ranked by RMCTs was, “If IE involves children with SEN without disruptive behaviour”. Again generally RMCTs were non-committal (CMS – Table 45a) in their acceptance of IE if this condition is met. 39.6% of RMCTs would accept the placement of behaviorally non-disruptive children with SEN, 24.9% were undecided, and 35.5% would not even accept non-disruptive children with SEN in their classes. SETs also ranked this condition as third in their list, RETs ranked it as joint third and head teachers ranked it as second. CMS of head teachers, SETs and RETs show that they have positive perceptions of RMCTs accepting the placement of behaviorally non-disruptive children with SEN. Difference of perception for this condition is relatively high within the RMCT group of primary teachers.

The fourth condition listed by RMCTs was “if given teaching incentives”. CMS shows that RMCTs in general were slightly non-committal about this condition. Only 19.4% of RMCTs would accept IE if given teaching incentives, 32.6% were undecided, and 48.0% would still not accept inclusion even given incentives. Both headteachers and SETs also have this condition fourth in their list, but RETs had it as second. SETs and RETs have a positive

perception that RMCTs would accept IE if given teaching incentives, but headteachers were non-committal. Difference in perception was relatively high for this condition within RMCTs, SETs and RETs.

The condition ranked fifth by RMCTs was that they would accept IE even if it negatively affects their annual teaching appraisal. CMS shows that generally RMCTs have a low acceptance of IE if the program affects their annual teaching appraisal. Only 15.5% of RMCTs agreed to accept it. Head teachers, SETs and RETs also ranked this condition as fifth in their list. They generally have non-committal perceptions of RMCTs' willingness to accept IE if their annual teaching appraisal is negatively affected by its implementation. Difference in perceptions for this condition is relatively high within SETs.

The least favoured condition was voluntarily to accept IE under the current teaching conditions in mainstream primary schools. CMS shows that generally RMCTs have a negative acceptance of IE for this condition. Only 7.7% of RMCTs will accept IE voluntarily if there were no change to the current teaching conditions, 21.1% were undecided and 71.2% would not accept it. Head teachers, SETs and RETs agreed with RMCTs in their ranking for this condition. They too put this condition last in their list and they also have a negative perception of RMCTs' willingness to accept IE under the current teaching conditions.

7.6 Influence of RMCTs' background characteristics (independent variables) on the three components of attitudes (dependent variables) to IE

Multivariate tests showed that there were no statistically significant main effects for the independent variables: (1) sex, $\{W\lambda = 0.99, F(3,410) = 0.32, p > 0.05\}$, (2) grade level taught $\{W\lambda = 0.99, F(6, 1085.05) = 1.19, p > 0.05\}$, (4) attendance of qualified SETs in the schools $\{W\lambda = 0.98, F(3, 413) = 2.19, p > 0.05\}$, (5) type of qualified SETs in the school $\{W\lambda = 0.98, F(3, 172) = 1.47, p > 0.05\}$, (6) contact with children with SEN at the professional level $\{W\lambda = 0.98, F(3, 413) = 2.19, p > 0.05\}$, (7) types of children with SEN in contact with at the professional level $\{W\lambda = 0.95, F(6, 340) = 1.48, p > 0.05\}$, and (8) schools with at the SECs tried placement $\{W\lambda = 0.97, F(3, 173) = 1.99, p > 0.05\}$, for the three dependent variables of cognitive, affective and conative component of attitudes.

Table 46 : CMS frequency and percentage score for the three components of attitudes based on RMCTs' background characteristics (independent variable)

		Grouping/Frequency/Percentage					
		Group 1		Group 2		Group 3	
CMS		f	%	f	%	f	%
46a: Sex							
Cognitive							
Male	2.42 ± 0.60	74	61.7	40	33.3	6	5.0
Female	2.38 ± 0.49	203	69.0	84	28.6	7	2.4
Affective							
Male	2.40 ± 0.48	79	65.8	37	30.8	4	3.3
Female	2.36 ± 0.47	214	72.8	73	24.8	7	2.4
Conative							
Male	2.71 ± 0.54	53	44.2	54	45.0	13	10.8
Female	2.67 ± 0.54	106	36.1	169	57.5	19	6.5
46b: Grade level taught							
Cognitive							
Phase 1 primary	2.42 ± 0.51	100	67.1	43	28.9	6	40.0
Phase 2 primary	2.39 ± 0.54	133	65.5	63	31.0	7	3.4
Phase 1 and 2 primary	2.30 ± 0.48	40	72.7	15	27.3	0	0.0
Affective							
Phase 1 primary	2.37 ± 0.45	107	71.8	37	24.8	5	3.4
Phase 2 primary	2.36 ± 0.48	145	71.4	54	26.6	4	2.0
Phase 1 and 2 primary	2.44 ± 0.49	36	65.5	17	30.9	2	3.6
Conative							
Phase 1 primary	2.68 ± 0.53	57	38.3	82	55.0	10	6.7
Phase 2 primary	2.66 ± 0.57	80	39.4	106	52.3	17	8.4
Phase 1 and 2 primary	2.77 ± 0.50	19	34.5	31	56.4	5	9.1

Table 46 : CMS, frequency and percentage scores for the three components of attitudes based on RMCTs' background characteristics (independent variables)

		Grouping/Frequency/Percentage					
		Group 1		Group 2		Group 3	
		f	%	f	%	f	%
CMS							
46c: Number of years teaching							
Cognitive							
Under 5 years	2.40 ± 0.47	55	66.3	27	32.5	1	1.2
6 to 10 years	2.33 ± 0.53	78	73.6	25	23.6	3	2.8
11 to 15 years	2.35 ± 0.44	42	72.4	15	25.9	1	1.7
16 to 20 years	2.36 ± 0.58	60	70.6	21	24.7	4	4.7
More than 20 years	2.51 ± 0.55	45	52.9	36	42.4	4	4.7
Affective							
Under 5 years	2.46 ± 0.52	49	59.0	32	38.6	2	2.4
6 to 10 years	2.34 ± 0.42	83	78.3	21	19.8	2	1.9
11 to 15 years	2.40 ± 0.59	39	67.2	16	27.6	3	5.2
16 to 20 years	2.33 ± 0.41	65	76.5	17	20.0	3	3.5
More than 20 years	2.35 ± 0.45	59	69.4	25	29.4	1	1.2
Conative							
Under 5 years	2.68 ± 0.54	30	36.1	50	60.2	3	3.6
6 to 10 years	2.69 ± 0.55	43	40.6	54	50.9	9	8.5
11 to 15 years	2.73 ± 0.55	20	34.5	32	55.2	6	10.3
16 to 20 years	2.65 ± 0.55	34	40.0	44	51.8	7	8.3
More than 20 years	2.67 ± 0.53	32	37.6	46	54.1	7	8.2
46d: Attendance of qualified SETs in school							
Cognitive							
Yes	2.45 ± 0.53	109	62.3	60	34.3	6	3.4
No	2.35 ± 0.52	171	70.7	64	26.4	7	2.9
Affective							
Yes	2.42 ± 0.49	119	68.0	49	28.0	7	4.0
No	2.33 ± 0.46	176	72.7	62	25.6	4	1.7
Conative							
Yes	2.70 ± 0.57	66	37.7	93	53.1	16	9.1
No	2.67 ± 0.52	93	38.4	133	55.0	16	6.6

Table 46: CMS, frequency and percentage scores for the three components of attitudes based on RMCTs' background characteristics (independent variables)

		Grouping/Frequency/Percentage					
		Group 1		Group 2		Group 3	
		f	%	f	%	f	%
CMS							
46e: Contact with children with SEN at the professional level							
Cognitive							
Yes	2.45 ± 0.53	109	62.3	60	34.3	6	3.4
No	2.35 ± 0.52	171	70.7	64	26.4	7	2.9
Affective							
Yes	2.42 ± 0.49	119	68.0	49	28.0	7	4.0
No	2.33 ± 0.46	176	72.7	62	25.6	4	1.7
Conative							
Yes	2.70 ± 0.57	66	37.7	93	53.1	16	9.1
No	2.67 ± 0.52	93	38.4	133	55.0	16	6.6

CMS shows that for all groups of RMCTs for the independent variables of: (1) sex (Table 46a), (2) grade level taught (Table 46b), (3) number of years teaching (Table 46c), (4) attendance of qualified SETs in the school (Table 46d), and (5) contact with children with SEN at the professional level (Table 46e), these teachers generally have negative cognitive and affective components of attitudes to IE. They are slightly non-committal in their conative component. Statistically, there was no significant difference in the three components of attitudes to IE for all groups of RMCTs in reference to the five independent variables.

CMS for the independent variable in contact with children with SEN at the professional level (Table 46e) show that generally RMCTs with such contact were slightly less negative for all of their three components of attitude compared to those without such contact. As with general attitudes to IE (refer to section 8.2), the same results as table 46e (with contact with children with SEN at the professional level) were obtained for the independent variable of attendance of qualified SETs in the school (Table 46d).

Table 46: CMS, frequency and percentage scores for the three components of attitudes based on RMCTs' background characteristics (independent variables)

CMS	Grouping/Frequency/Percentage					
	Group 1		Group 2		Group 3	
	f	%	f	%	f	%

46f: Type of qualified SETs in schools

Cognitive							
LD	2.43 ± 0.52	104	65.4	50	31.4	5	3.1
VI	2.65 ± 0.56	6	37.5	9	56.3	1	6.2
Affective							
LD	2.40 ± 0.48	110	69.2	43	27.0	6	5.9
VI	2.59 ± 0.59	10	62.5	5	31.3	1	6.2
Conative							
LD	2.69 ± 0.56	61	38.4	85	53.5	13	8.2
VI	2.82 ± 0.63	6	37.4	7	43.8	3	18.7

46g: Type of children with SEN in contact with at the professional level

Cognitive							
LD	2.44 ± 0.54	82	64.6	40	31.5	5	3.9
HI and VI	2.66 ± 0.57	5	31.3	10	62.5	1	6.3
HI and LD	2.38 ± 0.45	22	68.8	10	31.3	0	0.0
Affective							
LD	2.39 ± 0.50	89	70.1	32	25.2	6	4.7
HI and VI	2.65 ± 0.55	9	56.3	6	37.5	1	6.3
HI and LD	2.47 ± 0.34	12	65.6	11	34.4	0	0.0
Conative							
LD	2.70 ± 0.58	46	36.2	69	54.3	12	9.4
HI and VI	2.86 ± 0.62	5	31.3	8	50.0	3	18.8
HI and LD	2.65 ± 0.45	15	46.9	16	50.0	1	3.1

Table 46: CMS, frequency and percentage scores for the three components of attitudes based on RMCTs' background characteristics (independent variables)

CMS	Grouping/Frequency/Percentage					
	Group 1		Group 2		Group 3	
	f	%	f	%	f	%

46h: Type of qualified SETs in schools

Cognitive							
yes	2.56 ± 0.58	27	51.9	22	42.3	3	5.8
no	2.40 ± 0.50	82	66.7	38	30.9	3	2.4
Affective							
yes	2.50 ± 0.54	31	59.6	17	32.7	4	7.7
no	2.39 ± 0.46	88	71.5	32	26.0	3	2.4
Conative							
yes	2.56 ± 0.47	20	38.5	25	48.1	7	13.5
no	2.46 ± 0.38	46	37.4	68	55.3	9	7.3

For the independent variable of types of SETs in the school (CMS - Table 46i), RMCTs teaching in schools with qualified SETs for children with VI have more favourable cognitive, affective and conative components of attitudes compared to RMCTs in schools which have qualified SETs for children with LD. As for the independent variable of types of children with SEN in contact with at the professional level (CMS -Table 46g), RMCTs in contact with children with HI and VI have the most favourable (non-committal) three components of attitudes to IE, compared with the other two groups of RMCT, who have negative cognitive and affective components, though their conative component of attitude was noncommittal. As regards the independent variable of 'schools with SECs tried placement', the RMCTs in schools which had tried placement were less negative in their three components of attitudes, compared to RMCTs in schools which had never had such a trial. Again statistically, there were no significant differences for all three components of attitudes to IE for all groups of RMCTs for the three independent variables above.

7.7 Relationship between sections (A,B,C), sub-scales, and items of the attitudinal scales of PSTA questionnaire for RMCTs

The main objective for undertaking this part of data analysis was to determine the inter-relationship among the three components of attitudes to IE, sub-scales and items of the PSTA scales using bivariate Pearson correlation statistical test.

7.7.1 Relationship between perceived knowledge of IE (K1) and perceived ability to teach children with SEN (K2)

Table 47 : Inter-relationship between K1 and K2

	K2
Pearson Correlation	
K1	0.30

Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed test).

The bivariate correlation statistical test shows that was a significant positive relationship at 0.01 level between RMCTs' perceived knowledge of IE and their perceived ability to teach children with SEN.

7.7.2 Relationship between RMCTs' three components of attitudes towards IE

Table 48: Inter-relationship between cognitive, affective and conative components of attitudes

	Cognitive	Affective
Pearson Correlation		
Cognitive		0.23
Affective	0.23	
Conative	0.23	0.58

Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed test)

The bivariate correlation statistical test shows there were significantly positive relationships between RMCTs' three components of attitudes to IE at 0.01 level.

7.7.3 Relationship between RMCTs' perceived ability to teach children with SEN (K2) to the affective component of attitudes to IE (section B) and willingness to support the implementation of IE (item 32)

Table 49: Inter-relationship between K2, section B and item 32

	K2	Affective
Pearson Correlation		
K2		0.28
Affective	0.28	
Item 32	0.17	0.58

Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed test)

The bivariate correlation statistical test showed that there was a significant positive relationship at 0.01 level between RMTC's perceived ability to teach children with SEN and

their affective component of attitudes, and also their willingness to support the implementation of IE.

7.8 Perceived suitability of children with SEN for placement in mainstream classes

Three items, 15, 16, and 17 (Appendix 2) of the PSTA attitudinal scale were used in data analysis for this part of the findings. Primary teachers' perceptions of the suitability of the three types of children with SEN were recorded using descriptive statistics.

7.8.1 Primary teachers' perception of the suitability of the three types of children with SEN for IE

Table 50: CMS, frequency and percentage scores for perceived suitability for IE by primary teachers

Types of children with SEN		Grouping/Frequency/Percentage					
		S/Disagreed		Undecided		S/Agreed	
	CMS	f	%	f	%	f	%
HI	1.81 ± 0.98	450	84.9	33	6.2	47	8.9
LD	1.88 ± 1.05	408	77.0	64	12.1	58	11.0
VI	2.00 ± 1.07	435	82.0	31	5.8	64	12.1

CMS (Table 50) shows that generally primary teachers have low (negative) perception of the suitability of all three types of children with SEN for IE. Percentage scores show that more primary teachers either strongly disagreed or disagreed that children with HI (84.9%), and VI (82.0%) should be included in mainstream classes compared to children with LD (77.0%). Standard deviation scores indicate that there was a relatively high difference in perception among primary teachers on the suitability of children with LD and VI for IE.

7.8.2 RMCTs' perception of the suitability of different types of children with SEN for IE

Table 51: CMS, frequency and percentage scores for perceived suitability for IE by RMCTs

Types of children with SEN		Grouping/Frequency/Percentage					
		S/Disagreed		Undecided		S/Agreed	
	CMS	f	%	f	%	f	%
HI	1.70 ± 0.87	370	88.7	24	5.8	23	5.5
LD	1.91 ± 1.00	338	81.1	40	9.6	39	9.3
VI	1.68 ± 0.85	373	89.0	21	5.0	23	5.5

CMS (Table 51) shows that RMCTs generally have a very low (negative) perception of the suitability of the three types of children with SEN for IE. CMS indicates that children with LD were perceived as being the most suitable for IE compared to children with HI and VI. But standard deviation scores also indicate that there is a relatively higher difference in perceptions about the suitability of children with LD for IE compared to children with HI and VI. Percentage scores showed that 81.1% of RMCTs either strongly disagreed or disagreed that children with LD should be included compared with the 89.0% of teachers who disagreed with the inclusion of children with HI and VI. Conversely the percentages of RMCTs who either agreed or strongly agreed that children with SEN should be included were highest for children with LD (9.3%). Again differences in perception were relatively high among RMCTs for the suitability of children with LD or placement compared to children with HI and VI.

7.8.3 SETs' perception of the suitability of different types of children with SEN for IE

Table 52 : CMS, frequency and percentage scores for perceived suitability for IE by SETs

Types of children with SEN		Grouping/Frequency/Percentage					
		S/Disagreed		Undecided		S/Agreed	
		CMS	f	%	f	%	f
52a: Perceived suitability of children with HI for IE by SETs for the hearing impaired							
HI	2.41 ± 1.25	34	77.3	1	2.3	9	2.4
52b: Perceived suitability of children with VI for IE by SETs for the visually impaired							
LD	3.88 ± 1.55	2	25.0	2	25.0	4	50.0
52c: Perceived suitability of children with LD for IE by SETs for children with learning difficulties							
VI	2.21 ± 1.37	22	44.7	5	14.7	7	26.6c

CMS (Table 52b) shows that SETs teaching children with VI have a high (positive) perception of the suitability of these children for inclusion. In contrast SETs who teach children with HI (Table 52a) or children with LD (Table 52c) have a low (negative) perception of the suitability of their individual groups of children with SEN for IE.

7.8.4 Perceived suitability of different types of children with SEN for IE by RMCTs in school with SECs

7.8.4.1 With SECs for children with VI who have tried placement

Table 53a: CMS, frequency and percentage scores for perceived suitability for IE by RMCTs in school with SECs for children with VI

		Grouping/Frequency/Percentage					
		S/Disagreed		Undecided		S/Agreed	
	CM	f	%	f	%	f	%
VI	2.25 ± 1.34	9	56.3	4	25.0	3	18.8

7.8.4.2 With SECs for children with LD

The result of t-tests showed that there were no differences in RMCTs' perception for the independent variable of schools with SECs for children with LD tried placement {F(157), p>0.05} for the dependent variable item 15 (Appendix 2).

Table 53b: CMS, frequency and percentage scores for perceived suitability for IE by RMCTs in school with SECs for children with LD

		Grouping/Frequency/Percentage					
Children with LD		S/Disagreed		Undecided		S/Agreed	
	CMS	f	%	f	%	f	%
Schools tried placement							
yes	1.92 ± 0.94	28	77.8	5	13.9	3	8.3
no	1.90 ± 0.89	104	84.5	10	8.1	9	7.3

CMS shows that of the two mainstream primary schools which had tried placement, RMCTs in the school with SECs for children with VI (Table 53a) have a more favourable perception of the suitability of their children with SEN compared to RMCTs in the school with SECs for children with LD (Table 53b – yes group). But CMS also shows that both groups of RMCTs generally have a negative perception of the suitability of their respective children with SEN for IE. Differences in perception are relatively higher among RMCTs in the school with VI

compared to those in schools with SECs for children with LD based on standard deviation scores.

In mainstream schools with SECs for children with LD only, there were no differences in perception of the suitability of these children for IE among RMCTs in schools which had tried placement compared to RMCTs in schools which had never tried it previously. Both groups of primary teachers have a low perception of the suitability of these children for IE.

7.9 Open ended Items

Included in the PSTA questionnaire were two open-ended items (Appendix 2). Primary teachers were asked to express their view on: (1) the intended plan to introduce IE into mainstream schools, and (2) changes they felt should be undertaken at mainstream primary school stage prior to IE implementation.

7.9.1 Item 40

“Please state your views on the Education Ministry’s plan to include children with disabilities into regular classes to be taught alongside mainstream children”

The object of this item was to elicit primary teachers’ views about the Education Ministry’s intention to include children with SEN in mainstream classes.

Primary teachers’ responses to item 40 were categorized broadly into three groups: (1) disagree with the plan to implement IE, (2) undecided in their views about the plans, and (3) agreed with the plan (see section 7.2.7.1). Table 54 shows the number of primary teachers according to their professional status and their responses.

Table 54 shows that 72.3% (329) of respondents disagreed with the plan to introduce IE into mainstream primary schools, 16.3% (74) were undecided, and 11.4% (52) agreed with the plan. As for RMCTs, 81.5% (281) opposed the plan, 12.5% (43) were undecided, and 6.1%

(21) agreed with it. The percentage of RMCTs in ordinary mainstream schools who opposed the plan was higher (87.1%) compared to mainstream schools with SECs (72.8%). Conversely, the percentage of RMCTs in ordinary mainstream schools who supported the plan was lower (4.3%) compared to RMCTs in mainstream schools with SECs (8.8%).

Table 54 : Frequency for the three categories of responses for item 40 based on professional status

	Grouping/Frequency/Percentage		
	S/Disagreed	Undecided	S/Agreed
Professional Status			
RMCTs in			
i. ordinary schools	182	18	9
ii. schools with SECs	99	25	12
Headteachers	6	3	3
SETs for children with			
i. HI	22	12	8
ii. VI	2	3	3
iii. LD	12	10	12
RETs	6	3	5

Of the headteachers, 50% (6) disagreed with the IE plan. 25.0% (3) were undecided, and 25.0% (3) agreed with the plan. The percentage of RETs who disagreed with the plan was 42.9% (6), while 21.4% (3) RETs were undecided, and 35.7% (5) agreed with it.

The percentage of SETs who disagreed with IE planning was 42.9% (36). Of these SETs, 61.1% (22) teach children with HI, 5.5% (2) teach children with VI, and 33.3% (12) teach children with LD. From the SETs 29.8% (25) were undecided about plan, and of these 48.0% (12) teach children with HI, 12.0% (3) teach children with VI, and 40.0% (10) teach children with LD. The percentage of SETs who agreed with the IE were 27.4% (23); 34.8% (8) of these SETs teach children with HI, 13.0% (3) teach children with VI, and 52% (12) teach children with LD.

Primary teachers' reasons for disagreeing with the IE plan are as in table 55.

Table 55 : Reasons for disagreeing with the plan to implement IE and the number of primary teachers citing them	
Reasons	Number of teachers
1. IE would disrupt the current norms of the teaching and learning process.	80
2. IE will increase RMTs' workload	57
3. IE will have negative effect on mainstream children's learning	53
4. RMCTs do not have the appropriate skills to teach children with SEN	51
5. Children with SEN need specialised teaching and have the right to separate educational provision	46
6. Children with SEN would not be able to cope with mainstream learning	35
7. Mainstream classroom size is too high to support the placement of children with SEN	29
8. Children with SEN would be bullied and victimized by mainstream children	24
9. Children with SEN would be demoralized if included in mainstream classes	23
10. IE is difficult to implement because of:	17
a. disruptive behaviours in children with SEN	6
b. examination pressures	4
c. negative acceptance of RMTs	3
d. insufficient resources	2
e. negative acceptance of headteachers	2
11. KBSR syllabuses are unsuitable for children with LD	2
12. Children with SEN are not interested in being included in mainstream	1

classes	
13. There are no teaching assistants to help RMTCs involved in IE	

Table 55 indicates that there were thirteen reasons why primary teachers disagreed with the plan to implement IE in mainstream schools, with reason number 10 being sub-categorized into five components. The most cited reason among teachers who disagreed with the IE plan was the perception that IE would disrupt the normal routine of mainstream teaching and the learning process (24.3%). This was followed by the perceptions that IE would: (1) increase RMTCs' teaching workloads (17.3%), and (2) have a negative effect on mainstream children's learning (16.1%). The fourth most cited reason was the view that RMTCs do not have the required skills to teach children with SEN (15.5%), and the fifth was the perception that children with SEN need specialised teaching (14.0%).

Amongst the three least cited reasons for disagreeing were: (1) the lack of teaching assistants to help RMTCs involved with IE programme (0.3%), (2) the lack of evidence to suggest that children with SEN want to be placed in mainstream classes (0.6%), and (3) the unsuitability of the KBSR for children with LD (0.6%).

Primary teachers who were undecided in general agreed with the plan to include children with SEN but with reservations. These teacher used "if" and "but" when expressing their views to item 40 (see section 7.2.7.1). The "if" cited by these teachers are as in table 56, and "but" is as in table 57.

Table 56: The “if” cited by primary teachers who were undecided about the plan to implement IE and the number of primary teachers who cited similar “ifs”

Agree with the plan “if”:	Number
School communities are given extensive information on IE implementation process	6
RMTCs are given training in special education	6
Appropriate resourcing is made available to schools practising inclusion	5
Children with SEN included in mainstream classes:	5
Do not have a behavioral problem	4
Have the prerequisite skills (are ready)	3
Are intellectually able	3
Have mild disabilities	5
IE involves non-academic subjects only	4
All teachers in the school are willing to co-operate in the IE programme	1
The implementation of IE is properly planned	

Table 56 shows that there were seven categories of “if” cited by primary teachers who were undecided about the plan to include children with SEN, and that “if” number 4 was sub-categorised into four components. The two most common “ifs” were: (1) if the school communities are well informed about the process to implement the inclusion programme (8.1%) and (2) if RMCTs are given training in the art of teaching children with SEN (8.1%). The three least cited “ifs” were: (1) if the implementation is properly planned (1.4%), (2) if children with SEN have mild disabilities (4.1%), and (3) if children with SEN are intellectually able (4.1%).

Table 57: The “but” cited by primary teachers who were undecided about the plan to implement IE and the number of primary teachers who cited similar “buts”

Agreed with the plan “but”:	Number
1. Difficult to implement because,	7
a. Children with SEN have behavioural problem	6
b. Classroom population is too high	6
2. IE will increase RMTCs’ teaching workload	6
3. IE implementation needs to be planned carefully	5
4. Depends on the types of disabilities	4
5. IE will benefit only social skills development in children with SEN	3
6. Children with SEN,	3
a. Have low intellectual ability	3
b. Will develop inferiority complex	3
7. Schools do not have the appropriate resources to educate children with SEN	3
8. RMTCs are not trained to teach children with SEN	
9. IE will take time to succeed	

The majority of “buts” in table 57 was also cited by primary teachers who disagreed with the plan to place children with SEN in mainstream classes. There were nine categories of “but” put forward by primary teachers who were undecided about IE planned implementation. Categories 1 and 6 were sub-categorized into two components.

The three most cited “buts” among teachers who were undecided were (1) the behavioural problems of children with SEN (9.5%), (2) the high population of mainstream classes (8.1%), and (3) the increase in RMTCs’ teaching workload (8.1%). The least mentioned “buts” were: (1) IE will take time to succeed, (2) RMTCs are not trained to teach children with SEN, (3) mainstream schools are not equipped with the appropriate resources, (4) children with SEN have low intellectual ability. (All have the percentage score of 4.1%).

Reasons cited by primary teachers who agreed with the plan to implement IE are set out in table 58.

Table 58 : Reasons for agreeing with the plan to implement IE and the number of primary teachers who cited similar reasons	
Reasons	Number
1. IE would help in the realisation of the ‘caring society’	16
2. IE would promote and develop self-esteem in children with SEN	15
3. IE is in line with the national education philosophy of equal educational opportunities (Democratization of Education)	8
4. IE would make it easier for children with SEN to accommodate themselves in mainstream society	5
5. A good idea (no reasons provided)	4
6. IE would promote learning attainments in children with SEN	3
7. IE would enable children with SEN to attend the nearest school from home	1

Table 58 shows there were seven reasons why primary teachers agreed with the idea to include children with SEN in mainstream classes. The most mentioned reason cited by those who agreed is that IE would help to create a more ‘caring society’ (30.8%). The second most

cited reason was that IE would help to develop the self-esteem of children with SEN (28.9%). The two least mentioned reasons were: (1) IE would enable children with SEN to go to the nearest school from home (1.9%), and (2) IE would make children with SEN increase their learning attainments (5.8%).

7.9.2 Item 41

“What changes do you feel need to be made at the primary school level before children with disabilities are included in mainstream classes?”

A total of 349 primary teachers responded to item 41 of the PSTA questionnaire, (see section 7.2.7.2). Of these, 323 primary teachers made recommendations for change, and 26 advocated no changes because they disagreed with the plan to include children with SEN. Frequency of primary teachers who were interpreted as recommending similar changes LS included in table 59.

Table 59: Frequency of changes or actions recommended by primary teachers prior to IE implementation

Changes or actions recommended	Frequency
1 RMCT should be given in-service training in special education.	226
2 All mainstream schools involved in the IE programme should be provided with the appropriate physical resources (access to buildings, new classrooms, suitable toilets) and teaching equipment (teaching aids, furniture).	130
3 School communities should be articulate on the rationale of including children with SEN in mainstream classes, and should also promote due 'caring' feeling.	94
Among the school's communities mentioned were;	30
a. in general;	34
b. RMCTs;	7
c. headteachers;	23
d. mainstream children (mentioned specifically as needing to show 'caring' feeling).	92
4 The number of children in mainstream classes needs to be reduced to enable teachers to attend to the educational needs of children with SEN appropriately.	38
5 All mainstream schools involved in the IE programme should be provided with the services of relevant special education teachers' to act as adviser or consultant to RMCTs.	24
6 The post of teaching assistant be created in mainstream schools with IE programme to support RMCTs in fulfilling the educational needs of children with SEN.	22
7 Incentives be given to RMCTs involved in IE programme.	21
8 Certain aspects of current KBSR (New Primary Schools' Curriculum) should be modified to ensure that children with SEN may have wider access to the National Curriculum.	

Table 59: Frequency of changes or actions recommended by primary teachers prior to IE implementation

Changes or actions recommended	Frequency
9. Children with SEN should be prepared emotionally and should have acquired the pre-requisite skills before being included in mainstream classes.	17
10. RMCTs' teaching workloads need to be reduced, especially those involving non-teaching and clerical duties.	13
11. Attainment of mainstream children UPSR examination results should not be the sole basis of school's yearly appraisal or evaluation.	9
12. Credit should be accorded to mainstream schools in its yearly appraisal or evaluation for their good practice in IE.	8
13. Everyone in the school must be involved in the programme - the "whole schools approach".	4
14. Continuous evaluation, help and assistance for the programme at school, district and state levels.	4
15. Only RMCTs interested in the programme should be involved in the IE programme.	4
16. Inform and involve both parents of mainstream children and children with disabilities about IE.	3
17. RMCTs should be given access to educational psychologists.	3
18. Different types of evaluation of educational achievements of children with SEN (i.e. not for UPSR examination only).	2
19. Freedom for RMCTs to teach without interference from educational authorities.	2
20. Provide more residential opportunities in mainstream schools for children with SEN.	1
21. Increased financial support to schools involved in IE programme.	

22. The number of children with SEN included in mainstream classes should be limited.	
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Almost 70% (226) of primary teachers who suggested changes recommended that RMCTs be given in-service training in special education prior to IE implementation. 44.0% of primary teachers also felt that mainstream schools involved in IE programme would need to be provided with appropriate resourcing based on the types of children with SEN. The types of physical changes cited were the building of: (1) more classrooms (2) suitable toilets and (3) other facilities that would make school buildings accessible to all types of children irrespective of disability. Teachers also expressed the wish that mainstream schools be provided with appropriate teaching aids and equipment in order to facilitate teaching of children with SEN.

Besides those mentioned, 29.1% of teachers also recommended that the school's community be given information on the rationale and implementation process of IE. They also recommended that mainstream children be encouraged to display 'caring' feeling (29.1%). The IE programme's implementation should also be followed by reduction in class size (28.5% - 92), and the optimum size should be between 20 and 25. The fifth most cited recommendation was that schools with IE should be supplied with the service of SETs (11.8% - 38) to help RMCTs deal with educational difficulties of children with SEN. Teachers also felt that the Ministry of Education should create the post of assistant teacher (7.4% - 24) in schools practicing IE in order to help RMCTs with their teaching process.

The least cited changes recommended were: (1) number of children included in mainstream classes be limited (0.3%) (2) financial support to schools practicing IE be increased (0.6%) and (3) residential facilities in mainstream schools with SECs be increased (0.6%).

7.10 Conclusion

The findings from the questionnaires showed that RMCTs have broadly negative attitudes towards IE innovation. These negative general attitudes seem to be due to their negative cognitive and affective components of attitudes to IE, the conative components of attitudes being slightly neutral. Statistically, there were no significant differences in RMCTs' general attitudes to IE based on their background characteristics of sex, grade level taught, teaching experiences, types of children with SEN in contact with at the professional level, and schools with SECs that had tried placement. The only background characteristic that seems to have significant influence on RMCT attitudes to IE was contact with children with SEN at the professional level. Primary teachers provided thirteen reasons for opposing IE innovation in mainstream primary schools.

The findings of the questionnaires also showed there was a conflict between RMCTs' perceptions of the 'caring society' and the 'rights of children with SEN to IE'. The RMCTs perceived themselves as understanding the 'caring society' concept, and this perception was recognized and confirmed by the headteachers, SETs, and RETs. But the RMCTs were slightly neutral on the rights of children with SEN to IE. Thus the findings indicated that the RMCTs 'caring' concept does not extend to the right of equal opportunities to mainstream education for these children. The RMCTs seem to think that 'caring' for children with SEN should not be translated into IE practices. To RMCTs, 'caring' for these children should be in some other form of education that does not involve placing them in mainstream primary classes.

The findings (see Table 45) showed that RMCTs may be persuaded to accept IE innovation, if certain conditions are met by the Ministry of Education. The most popular condition was the need for specialist support to be provided. This was also confirmed by headteachers, SETs, and RETs, who agreed that RMCTs would be willing to give IE a chance if RMCTs are given specialist support. RMCTs would also positively accept IE if they are given teaching incentives, and if IE does not affect their annual teaching appraisal. They would also accept IE if it involves children with SEN without disruptive behaviours. The findings also showed

that RMCTs would not accept IE readily i.e. unless there are some changes in present primary school practices. These opinions were also shared by headteachers, SETs, and RETs.

The fact that RMCTs are unwilling to accept IE in the present climate of mainstream primary teaching would appear to be of major significance. RMCTs do wish to see changes at the primary level of schooling before IE is implemented. Yet primary teachers in general are also of the opinion that RMCTs would accept IE if so directed by the Ministry of Education. As civil servants RMCTs are of course required to observe and implement Ministry directives. Nevertheless in the light of the present research evidence there may be need for careful preparation at several levels before IE implementation proceeds, so as to secure maximum co-operation from the teaching force and to obviate alienation and consequent failure.

Statistical tests showed that RMCT background characteristics do not have any significant effect on the three components of their attitudes to IE. But the tests did show that there are significant positive relationships between the three components of attitudes. The study indicates that if RMCTs were knowledgeable about IE and perceived themselves as having the appropriate and necessary skills to teach children with SEN, they would be likely to exhibit positive feelings towards IE, and may then be the more willing to accept its implementation.

So, the questionnaire findings showed that generally RMCTs have negative attitudes to IE innovation. The second stage of data collection using the semi-structured interviews was undertaken to probe more deeply into the reasons for such negative attitudes. To this end notions of 'background variables' needed to be further explored holistically so as to understand the complex interrelationship and interdependence of contextual factors in determining how primary teachers respond to 'top down' i.e. imposed, radical reform. The analysis of these interviews is presented in the following chapter.

This chapter reports on and discusses the findings derived from the Primary School Teachers' Attitudes interview conducted with the mainstream school teachers. There is discussion of the main attitudes identified which emerged from the different teacher groups in the study, leading to a statement of general conclusions. In this chapter the quantitative data concerning frequencies of teachers' attitudes to the variables investigated is in a number of places exemplified and clarified by the use of direct quotations from the essentially qualitative material obtained (as listed in Appendix 13).

Data analysis

The first stage of the data analysis was to transcribe the tape recordings of the interview sessions with 46 respondents. From these, teacher comments on the issues pertaining to IE in Malaysia were coded into three categories: (1) affirmative about the issues on IE being discussed (2) undecided on the issue, and (3) negative towards the issue. For every question discussed the individual teacher's reasons for having affirmative, undecided or negative views were coded according to its interpretative similarities. The codes used for analysing the interviews were arranged in sequence based on the interview schedule items (Appendix 8 - English version) as in Appendix 12. The untranscribed interviews (with 31 respondents) were analysed using the same coding system by listening directly to the recorded tapes. This was undertaken after the transcripts of the 46 respondents had been analysed. There was no additional code added to Appendix 12 as the result of analysing the untranscribed interviews.

Qualitative data analysis

Commentators such as Creswell (1994) and Patton (2002) suggest that there is no single correct method for analyzing qualitative data but clearly the course of action chosen must reflect the purposes of the study.

The four types of primary schools whose teachers were interviewed were grouped as follows.

- a. mainstream schools with SECs for children with LD. These schools were further sub-divided into two, with experience of having children with SEN placed in mainstream classes, and without such experience;
- b. one mainstream school with SECs for children with VI
- c. ordinary mainstream schools. These also included all the RETs
- d. one special education school for children with HI

The process of qualitative data analysis is an inductive approach to classify the data into groups (categories) and to identify patterns and relationships among these categories. Unlike the quantitative data, where categories and patterns of relationships are known in advance and are intentionally predetermined, the qualitative data itself determines the emerging categories and patterns of relationships (McMillan and Schumacher, 1997). Stressing this point, Dey (1995) stated that categories of qualitative data cannot be presented arbitrarily as they (the categories) should reflect the data itself and, inevitably, be elicited from it.

Patton (2002) defines the process of analysing qualitative data as extracting fruitful information and reducing its actual size, to determine beneficial patterns and to build a framework vision of it in order to arrive at the essence of what this information conveys. There is no single ideal approach to analysing qualitative data (McMillan and Schumacher, 1997).

At this point, before we look at an item by item analysis of the interview data to be presented here, it may be helpful to list the main inclusive educational themes investigated in terms of the three main attitudinal components (or categories) posited in the earlier methodological discussion (Chapter 6). They are shown below in tabular form in which each number given represents the related question number in the Primary School Teachers' Attitudes interview.

Category of attitude component	Themes for qualitative data analysis	Interview respondents
Cognitive	1 Knowledge of Education Ministry plans for IE	Head teachers SET
	2 Understanding of term SEN	
	3 Understanding of term IE	
	4 Discussion with colleagues about inclusion of SEN children in mainstream classes	
	5 Rating of own and colleagues' understanding of Education Ministry rationale	
	6 Rating of own and colleagues' ability to teach SEN children in mainstream classes	
	7 Rating of own and colleagues' willingness to attend training for IE	
Affective	8 Right of SEN children to be educated in mainstream classes.	RET
	9 Advantages of including SEN children in mainstream classes	RMCT
	10 Suitability of current KBSR curriculum for children with SEN	SET(HI)
	11 Teachers' workload if SEN children included	SET(LD)
	12 Effect on mainstream children of including SEN children	SET(VI)
	13 Effect on school's yearly appraisal of SEN inclusion	RMCT(LD)
	14 Type of SEN child most suitable for inclusion	RMCT(VI)
Conative	15 Support for Education Ministry plan	RMCT(HI)
	16 Readiness of school to include children with SEN	
	17 Conditions for accepting inclusion of SEN children	
	18 Obstacles to implementation of inclusion	
	19 Changes desirable before implementation of IE	
	20 Suggestions for gaining support for IE	
	21 Further comment welcomed	

As shown above, seven main themes were selected for their contribution towards the assessment of each of the three attitude components investigated. All of the themes were discussed in interview with all ten grades of teacher respondents listed. The interviews were carried out in the medium of Bahasa Malaysia, and later transcribed in full and translated for analysis, as recorded in Appendix 13. This was done to ensure that none of the social encounter factors (Cohen et al, 2000) arising during the interview were lost. (Examples of social encounter factors commonly recorded include: the tone of voice of the speakers, emphasis placed by the speakers, the mood of the speakers, interruptions and the speed of the talk (Cohen et al, 2000. p282).

The time spent working manually on the script and the construction of the indexing code gave the writer an opportunity to ensure reliability in coding the transcript and in content analysis.

Interviews

Even though quantitative data were gathered from the teacher questionnaires, it was judged essential to explore that material fully via further in-depth interviewing of a smaller sample to better understand teacher attitudes towards IE in Malaysia.

A semi-structured, face to face form of interview using open-ended questions as suggested by Salkind (1997) and Oppenheim (1992, 2000) was employed.

Despite the appropriateness of the interview method, several weaknesses that might affect the data obtained must be acknowledged. Patton (2002) argues that there are weaknesses or limitations in interview as a data collection method. Namely these are: the participants can only report their perceptions of and perspectives on what has happened; interview data can be greatly affected by the emotional state of the interviewee at the time the interview session takes place; interview data are also subject to recall error; reactivity of the interviewee to the interviewer, and deliberate misrepresentation for whatever reason it might occur.

Statement of results II

In presenting the interview findings wherever appropriate, primary teachers were allocated according to the type of school they taught in. Tables detailing teacher responses to specific issues are given at the end of the section of findings in relation to primary teachers' professional status. Numbers in brackets in some of the findings signify the number of primary teachers who gave similar reasons in their response to specific issues. For the interviews, teachers were asked to refer to children with SEN in their schools during the discussions if the schools had SECs or if the school was a special education school.

8.1 The education of children with SEN in Melaka primary schools

At the time of interviewing there were two types of educational provision for children with SEN in the state of Melaka.: (1) children with SEN were educated in SECs located in mainstream primary schools. Only children with VI and LD were taught in these classes. Since these SECs were part of the mainstream schools, the schools' head teachers were responsible for heading the administration of these classes, assisted by the individual school's special education coordinator. (2) Children with SEN were educated in schools or institutions established to cater for their particular types of educational needs. This provision was for children with HI. Of the seven mainstream schools selected, four had SECs located in their vicinity, and one was a dedicated special education school.

8.2 Cognitive Component of attitudes to IE

8.2.1 Primary teachers' concepts of children with SEN

The majority of primary teachers interviewed (62) described children with SEN as children with sensory (hearing and sight) and intellectual disabilities. This is the official Ministry of Education definition of children with SEN. There were other definitions of children with SEN given by teachers interviewed. Four teachers included children with slow learners needs as children with SEN besides the three mentioned.

Table 60 : Definition of children with SEN in the Malaysian context	
Definitions	Frequency
1. Children with disabilities	62
2. Children with physical impairment and remedial education needs.	4
3. Children with learning problems but not handicap.	2
4. Children who need specialized teaching and resources.	8
Total	76

8.2.2 RMCTs' perceived knowledge of the Education Ministry's special education programme

All SETs interviewed claimed their schools received some circulars from the State Education Department regarding the Ministry's Special education programme. Only one of the three head teachers reported having received such circulars. The head teacher at the school with SECs (LD) that had tried placement claimed that since being posted there she had never received any such documents. To cite her response as listed in Appendix 13 (8.2.2):

"When I was posted to this school, its SEC (LD) was already established. Ever since I arrived I have never received any circulars from the State Education Department or other relevant educational authorities concerning children with disabilities."

The head teacher from the ordinary mainstream primary school said he had never received any documents on special education. Only three RMCTs from mainstream schools with SECs (LD) and two from schools with SEC (VI) claimed they had read the circulars. One RMCT who had seen these documents admitted she could not remember their content.

The rest of the RMCTs interviewed claimed they had never seen any relevant documents. Non-involvement in their schools' special education programme was the reason cited by these RMCTs in schools whose administrators had not distributed these documents to them. This

reason was supported by the head teacher with SECs (VI) who said that all circulars on special education that she had received were meant for the school's SETs and not for the RMCTs. But the SETs in schools with SECs (LD) that had tried placement, claimed the documents were available in the school's files. The RMCTs in the school are reportedly not interested in reading them because their contents do not concern them, since special education is not part of their teaching responsibility.

Therefore, even though mainstream schools with SECs had been sent official documents on special education, the majority of the RMCTs in the schools had not read them, thus limiting their knowledge about the Ministry's special education programme. As for RMCTs in ordinary schools, their knowledge of special education documents in the schools may be inferred from Table 61 i.e. almost ninety percent had had no sight of available circulars. To quote from one RMCT (LD) in Appendix 13 (8.2.2):

"I am not sure the school has any circulars concerning the school special education programme. It was never discussed before. Maybe because I am not a special education teacher."

Table 61 : Document on the Ministry of Education special education programme.		
Professional status	Received	
	YES	NO
1. RMCTs	5	38
2. Head teachers	1	2
3. SETs	24	
4. RETs		6
Totals	30	46

8.2.3 RMCTs' perceived knowledge of their school's children with SEN

Five SETs and the head teacher in schools with SECs (LD) felt generally that RMCTs in their schools do not personally know the school's children with LD. The head teacher of the school that had tried placement claimed only a small minority of the school's teachers regularly discussed the welfare of children with LD with her, and these teachers were either the school's SETs or RMCTs involved with the special placement programme. Five SETs said RMCTs who regularly visit the schools' SECs during their free times were usually sensitive to the general welfare of children with LD, and would make an effort to help them in whatever way possible. To quote one such SET (LD) from Appendix 13 (8.2.3):

"There are RMCTs who know my class children and there are also those who don't. Those who regularly visit our class during their free times are aware of the existence of our children, and usually are sensitive towards these children's welfare. If anything happens to our children they will either help them or inform us about it. RMCTs who are not interested only know these children from afar."

Three RMCTs in the schools with SECs (LD) claimed they had good knowledge of the school's children with LD because they regularly interact with these children by making frequent visits to the school's SECs. One of these RMCTs was involved in the school's placement programme. The other three RMCTs who had experienced children with LD placed in their class, admitted knowing well only those sent to their class, not the rest of the school's children with LD. The rest of the RMCTs in these schools admitted they did not know children with LD personally, except that they have behavioural problems and are intellectually very weak.

SETs interviewed in the school with SECs (VI) considered that the RMCTs in the school did not personally know their school's children with VI, owing to their lack of interest. The school head teacher and one SET felt that RMCTs knew well only the two children with moderate VI who were placed in mainstream classes, but not children with VI in RMCs. SETs in the school claimed that RMCTs hardly visit the school's SECs to inquire about children with VI. Only one of the RMCTs interviewed in the school reported knowing the children with VI very well, because he was responsible for overseeing their everyday needs

and welfare. The other RMCTs admitted they knew very little about these children because they seldom or never go to the school's SECs. To illustrate from Appendix 13 (8.2.3):

"I regularly visit the school SEC, just to talk to the SET, and say hello to the class children with LD. I don't know deeply their learning problems, but I do know that they are lower in achievement compared to children with remedial educational needs. Besides being slow in learning these children experience some kind of behavioural problems as well."

Five SETs in the special education school (HI) believed RMCTs in their neighbouring mainstream school knew little about their children with HI, except that they communicate using sign language. Assumed lack of interest from RMCTs and the schools' segregated setting were cited as reasons by these SETs.

The interviews show that the majority of RMCTs in schools with SECs knew very little about their school's children with SEN, and this was supported by the majority of the schools' SETs (18) interviewed. As for the four RMCTs who had experienced having children with LD in their classes, only one claimed she knew the children quite well because she regularly visited the SECs. The other three admitted knowing only those children who were in their classes.

Table 62: RMCTs' knowledge of their school's children with SEN			
	Know children with SEN		
Professional status	Not very well	Moderately well/ some do, some do not	Quite well
1. RMCTs	26	3	4
As perceived by:			
2. Headteachers	1	1	
3. SETs	18	6	
Total	45	10	4
Note: Figures do not include RETs and RMCTs, and headteachers in ordinary schools			

8.2.4 Primary teachers' understanding of IE in Malaysia

Teachers were asked to express their understanding of the term IE. A total of 35 teachers replied that they either had not heard of IE or had no understanding of the types of education it refers to. Of these, ten RMCTs were from schools with SECs (LD) which had tried placement, and nine RMCTs were from schools with SECs (LD) which had not experienced placement. Five RMCTs were from the school with SECs (VI). All ten RMCTs and the headteacher from one ordinary mainstream school expressed ignorance of the term. To quote this headteacher Appendix 13 (8.2.4):

"I am not sure what the concept of IE is all about. I seldom used it"

The rest of the teachers (41) interviewed described IE as the placement either fully or partially of children with SEN in mainstream classes, to be educated alongside mainstream children and taught by the same class teachers. Teachers who regard IE as partial placement of children with SEN in mainstream classes argued that they should only be included for subjects which they could cope with intellectually. One RMCT (LD) said Appendix 13 (8.2.4):

"IE is the placement of children with disabilities in this school into mainstream classes for certain subject/s or for all subjects. Last year several were included in my class for art lessons."

Table 63: Teachers description of IE	
Descriptions	Number
1. No comment.	35
2. The placement of children with SEN into mainstream classes fully or partially.	41
Total	76

8.2.5 Knowledge of the Education Ministry's intention to place children with SEN in mainstream classes

8.2.5.1 Official documents on IE by the State Education Department

All teachers interviewed claimed they had never received any relevant information or circulars from the State Education Department even in the schools that had tried and the one that was trying to practice placement. Of all the RMCTs interviewed, 14 mentioned that the only document that they had come across about IE was the questionnaire which was distributed as part of this study. To quote Appendix 13 (8.2.5):

"The Education Ministry wants to introduce IE but until now we, the teachers in this school have not been informed either verbally or in writing of what is expected of us in relation to the programme. I think it is about time someone from the State Education Department came to the school and explained to us teachers what is going on."

8.2.5.2 School's discussions on IE

The headteacher and SETs in the school with SECs (LD) that had tried placement, admitted they had discussed only some aspects of IE in any depth with RMCTs involved in the school's placement programme. This was confirmed by the four RMCTs involved in the programme. They said there were several discussions between them, SETs, and the headteacher, formally and informally, prior to children with LD being included in their classes e.g. Appendix 13 (8.2.5.2):

"When we planned to place children with LD into mainstream classes in 1995 and 1996, we and the head teacher invited RMCTs who agreed to have these children in their classes for discussions on how the programme should be implemented. RMCTs who were not involved in the placement programme did not take part in the discussions."

As for the rest of the school's RMCTs, the headteacher had briefly mentioned IE once during her school's formal staff meetings. In the other schools with SECs (LD), SETs in the schools reported they had informal talks with several of their RMCT colleagues about IE. But only three RMCTs reported having had talks with SETs about the possibility of children with LD being included in their classes. The other nine had not.

In the school with SECs (VI), the headteacher said she and the school's SEN co-coordinator had discussed IE with RMCTs involved in the placement of children with moderate VI, but not with the other RMCTs. To quote Appendix 13 (8.2.5.2):

“The discussions were done informally between me, SET and RMCT involved in the teaching of the two children with moderate VI included in mainstream classes. There were no such discussions with RMCTs not involved in the education of these two children.”

Three SETs claimed they had tried informally to discuss with several of their RMCT colleagues the possibility of children with VI being included in mainstream classes. One of the three SETs admitted she stopped the discussions because she felt the RMCTs were uninterested in the topic. The other four SETs said they had never discussed IE with the school’s RMCTs. None of the school’s RMCTs reported they had any discussions on IE with either the headteacher or the SETs. They attributed this to the school not having any plan to place children with VI in their classes.

RMCTs in ordinary mainstream schools admitted they had never discussed IE with either the headteacher or the schools’ RETs. This was confirmed by the headteacher and RETs. Their reason was that the schools do not have SECs for children with SEN. In fact, the discussions in one ordinary mainstream school, according to the headteacher, were about trying to register one child whom the school felt had LD in the SEC (LD) of a mainstream primary school. He said (Appendix 13, 8.2.5.2):

“We had never discussed the possible placement of children with disabilities into this school. But we did discuss on few occasions about a SEC for children with LD established recently in one mainstream school nearby. Our discussions were on how to register one of our schoolchildren whom we considered as having mental disabilities into this SEC. This is the opposite to what we are discussing now.”

None of the SETs in the special education school (HI) admitted having discussions with neighbouring RMCTs on the possibility of children with HI being included in mainstream classes. The fences separating the two schools were blamed for this lack of communication, Appendix 13, 8.2.5.2:

“Maybe the schools’ fences make it difficult for me to talk informally with our neighbouring RMCTs about special education and IE.”

Table 64: Discussion on IE			
Professional status	Never discussed	Had discussed	Only with selected teachers
1. RMCTs	36	7	2
2. Headteachers	1		2
3. SETs	11		13
4. RETs	6		
Total	54	7	15

8.2.5 RMCT perceived rationale of the Ministry's plan

All headteachers, SETs and RETs interviewed perceived that very few RMCTs really understand why the Ministry wants to include children with SEN in mainstream classes. Lack of information and lack of interest were cited as reasons. One SEC (LD) stated (Appendix 13, 8.2.6.)

"IE if properly implemented could have a positive effect on the education of those with disabilities. Sadly as far as I can remember no one on behalf of the State Education Department has come to this school to explain to all our teachers the rationale and the importance of its implementation and so on. You can't expect teachers to simply accept something which they don't understand or implement a new concept of education that they know very little about. Presently IE is being planned by the top administration of the Education Ministry, but we the teachers in the schools have no clue to what it is all about or what is expected of us with reference to the programme."

These opinions were supported by the JPN officer, who felt generally that RMCTs in the state of Melaka do not know why the federal Ministry wants to implement IE. He felt RMCTs had a very low interest in the education of children with SEN because of their non-contact with these children.

The RMCTs were asked to suggest possible reasons for the Ministry's plan to introduce IE. Ten RMCTs either replied that they did not know or would not comment. Of these, three were RMCTs (LD) who had children with LD in their classes. Several reasons were suggested for the Ministry's wanting to introduce IE. These are:

- i. to prevent children with SEN from having inferiority complexes (9).
- ii. to accommodate children with SEN into mainstream society (8).
- iii. to create a “caring feeling” within mainstream children (8).
- iv. to increase the educational development of children with SEN (6).
- v. to save cost of building new special education schools or establishing new SECs in mainstream schools (6).
- vi. to give children with SEN equal opportunities in education (1).
- vii. to enable children with SEN to attend the nearest school to their home (1).

These possible reasons were provided by 33 RMCTs; a further 10 RMCTs declined to give reasons.

8.2.6 Perceived abilities of RMCTs to teach children with SEN a. School with SECs (LD) that had tried placement

The headteacher in this school was confident about the school’s RMCTs’ ability to teach children with LD. She based this on their experience of including children with LD according to their intellectual ability rather than actual age. Therefore she argued that RMCTs could teach these children like any other children in the class. To quote (Appendix 13, 8.2.7):

“I think RMCTs are able to teach children with LD included in their classes. Even though these children’s chronological age is higher, their intellectual capacity is at par with the other children in the classes. Therefore all RMCTs have to do is teach these children like any other children in the class.”

SETs in the school too had a positive perception of RMCTs’ ability to teach children with LD. They argued they had managed to teach children with LD without undergoing any in-service training in special education. Four RMCTs (one with tried placement) felt they could teach children with LD but did not give any specific reason for their beliefs. They acknowledged it would be better if they had been trained in special education (LD). Three RMCTs had mixed views arguing that they might not have the patience to teach children with LD. Eight RMCTs (three had experienced placement) had negative perceptions of their teaching ability owing to their inexperience and lack of special training. One RMCT (LD) who had tried special placement declared (Appendix 13 (8.2.7):

"I don't think I have the skills to teach these children because when children with LD were included in my class for mathematics lessons, I just couldn't make them understand the mathematics concept I was trying to teach. With mainstream children you can just use your fingers to show one plus one. But with these children you have to use so many other materials just to make them understand this. They also have difficulty in concentrating on their learning. Most of the time they like to play."

b. School with SECs (LD)

Four SETs in these schools felt RMCTs could teach children with LD. Their reasons were that RMCTs are qualified teachers, and in any case several SETs were themselves not officially trained in special education (LD) or remedial educational. One SET (LD) said (13, 8.2.7.):

"There are teachers teaching in SECs who never had any training in special education. With guidance they have managed to learn to teach these children quite well. If we have to rely on teachers with training in special education only to teach children with LD, than we won't have enough teachers to teach in SECs. I guess any RMCT can teach our children with LD. The requirements are interest, commitment and a little help from experienced SETs."

Four SETs felt RMCTs were unable to teach these children because they themselves had not been especially or appropriately experienced. From Appendix 13 (8.2.7.):

"Every teacher can teach because that's what teachers do. But how effective is the teaching? Teaching mainstream children and children with LD are not exactly the same. I am not convinced that RMCTs can teach children with LD effectively because of their inexperience with these children."

Five RMCTs felt they are able to teach these children. Their reasons were that (1) they just felt they could, and (2) they were used to teaching low achieving children in mainstream classes. One of these RMCTs said she could teach children with LD because she had attended in-service training in remedial education. Seven RMCTs had negative perceptions of their ability because they had not been trained in special education (LD) and had no experience of teaching these children.

c. School with SECs (VI)

The headteacher felt the RMCTs would have difficulties in teaching children with VI because they were not trained in special education (VI). Six SETs felt RMCTs could teach these children because several of themselves had not been officially trained in special education (VI). But they admitted it takes time and much determination to fully master specific skills such as Braille. One SET (VI) said (Appendix 13, 8.2.7):

“There are only two officially trained SETs for children with VI in this school. The rest of us had never attended in-service training. If we can do it, why shouldn't other RMCTs be able to do it as well? The only problem is that they have to learn to read and type in Braille, which would take a bit of time to learn but can be learned with perseverance.”

One SET with in-service training in special education (VI) had a negative perception of the RMCTs' ability to teach these children. His reasons were that RMCTs cannot read and type in Braille and do not have the skills to teach children with VI mobility orientation. One RMCT claimed he is able to teach these children because there were several SETs (VI) who had never been officially trained in special education (VI). He stated (Appendix 13, 8.2.7):

“I think I can if given a little bit of training in Braille because many of the teachers teaching in SEC now had never attended in-service in special education.”

However five RMCTs felt themselves unable to teach these children because of their ignorance of Braille.

d. Ordinary mainstream schools

One mainstream headteacher felt his RMCTs could teach children with LD, but not children with VI and HI. This was also the perception of one RET. Five RETs had negative perceptions of their school RMCTs' ability to teach children with SEN because they were not trained in special education. Three RMCTs in the ordinary schools had positive perceptions of their ability to teach children with LD, but not children with HI and VI. Seven RMCTs cited not being trained in special education and/or having no experience in the teaching of children with SEN as their reasons for their perceived inability to teach these children. One of them said (Appendix 13, 8.2.7):

“We have one child in this school who teachers regarded as a child with mental disabilities. We try to teach him as best we can but until now he still cannot read or write. The teachers in this school have no idea how to help him with his problems. When we teach, we try to help him as much as possible but so far we are unsuccessful. Maybe there are other ways to make him learn, but none of us have any training in special education.”

e. Special education school (HI)

Five SETs in this single school saw RMCTs as not being able to teach children with HI because they are not trained in the use of sign language communication. Two SETs felt RMCTs could teach these children because they themselves had not been officially trained in special education (HI). They admitted it took a lot of hard work and determination before they became proficient in sign language. As one SET (HI) said (Appendix 13, 8.2.7):

“I was requested to teach in this school because the school needs teachers. I agreed voluntarily to teach here. When I first arrived I just didn’t know how to start to teach these children, because my teaching experience had always been with mainstream children. For days I had sleepless nights. With the head teacher’s encouragement and the help of other SETs, I slowly began to communicate with the children using sign language. Now I feel confident in my teaching. Thus if I can do it, I am sure other RMCTs can do it too.”

Table 65: RMCTs’ ability to teach children with SEN			
Professional status	Abilities to teach		
	No	Unsure	Yes
1. RMCTs	27	6	10
Perceived ability to teach by:			
2. Head teachers	1	1	1
3. SETs	10		14
4. RETs	5	1	
Total	43	8	25

8.3 Affective component of attitudes

8.3.1 Perceived right of children with SEN to IE

a. School with SECs (LD) that had tried placement

Eight RMCTs (two had experienced placement) in the school expressed the opinions that children with LD have the right to be included in mainstream classes. Their reasons were that the national education policy guarantees equal educational and social opportunities for all children. The headteacher, two SETs and six RMCTs (two had tried placement) had mixed views about this. They reasoned that children with LD might have the right to IE, if they are ready intellectually and behaviourally, and if they could cope with the learning environment of mainstream classes. These teachers felt the over-emphasis on academic achievements in mainstream learning would make IE difficult for these children. They recommended partial rather than full placement of children with LD and only in certain subjects. To quote one SET (LD) Appendix 13, 8.3.1:

“For some children with LD, yes, for others, no, because the types of teaching used in mainstream classes are not suitable for some of these children who are not ready for inclusion. The rate of learning and the over-emphasis on academic achievements make it difficult for the majority of our children with LD to cope with mainstream learning.”

However one RMCT was clearly of the opinion these children have the right to a separate specialised educational provision i.e. Appendix 13, 8.3.1:

“If we give them the right to inclusion they would not get their full right in education. In SECs they will have that extra special education which they are entitled to and the extra funding which is allocated to SECs by the Education Ministry.”

b. Schools with SECs (LD)

Four SETs and one RMCT in these schools agreed that children with LD have the right to IE because of equal educational opportunities so as to maximise their learning potential and to socialise fully. Appendix 13, 8.3.1:

“Our education philosophy clearly stated that 'Education is for all', and the national special education philosophy states that 'Children with special needs should be given the opportunities to maximise their education potential'. So I don't see why they should be

denied their rights to be included in mainstream classes if it could maximise their learning potential."

They conceded that IE would prevent these children from developing feelings of inferiority. One RMCT (LD) stated (Appendix 13, 8.3.1):

"They have the right to mix with mainstream children to prevent them from being isolated and demoralised within the school's community."

Four SETs and five RMCTs had mixed feelings. They argued that only 'high-functioning' children with LD might have the capacity to benefit from IE because of the assumption that these children could cope with the pace of mainstream academic learning. But they agreed that other children with LD might have the right to be so placed for non-academic subjects. One RMCT (LD) said:

"I think they have the right for non-academic subjects. For academic subjects they also have the right if they could cope with the pace in which these academic subjects are being taught in mainstream classes."

Four RMCTs said the current different education facilities for children with LD should be maintained. Two RMCTs declined to comment.

c. School with SECs (VI)

The headteacher and three SETs accepted that children with VI in the school had the right to IE so as to prevent them from being isolated in mainstream society and also to give them the chance to learn to be independent. This was clearly stated by the SET (VI) who stated (Appendix 13, 8.3.1):

"They are also human. If we don't train them at a very early age on how to get along in society, they would be left out on many opportunities to make themselves useful and most important of all be self-dependent. We don't want these children to be mixing with blind people only, once they leave school."

Three SETs and four RMCTs who were unsure said maybe children with moderate VI have this right, and for those with severe VI, maybe those who had mastered the use of Braille. One RMCT said:

"For those children who have mastered the use of Braille, maybe when they are included they can Braille their own notes instead of just listening only. But the problem now is that many of

these children with VI can't even use the Braille properly. They need guidance on how to use it. We don't know how to help them."

One RMCT said these children's education should remain as it is. One RMCT and one SET declined to make any comment.

d. Ordinary mainstream schools

Three RETs and seven RMCTs declared that children with SEN have the right to IE because of equal education and socialisation opportunities. As one headteacher stated (Appendix 13, 8.3.1):

"If there are ways in which children with disabilities can be helped with mainstream classroom learning, then they should be included in order for them to become part of mainstream community, and for humanitarian reasons."

Other headteachers, two RETs, and one RMCT had mixed views. As one RET said:

"It is not just the question of right It is whether these children can cope with mainstream learning. What's the point of granting them their rights to inclusion when the objectives of educating them are unreachable? They need specialised teaching by trained specialist teachers. Grant them their rights to a different educational provision."

They argued these children have the right, if ways can be found to teach them effectively in mainstream classes, but not otherwise. They also felt that children with VI and HI may have the right to be included since they are being taught the same syllabuses as mainstream children. This right should only be extended to children with LD who might be able to cope with the rigors of mainstream learning, both academically and socially. One RET and two RMCTs said children with SEN should be taught by specialised teachers in SECs.

e. Special education school (HI)

All seven SETs in the school had mixed views on the IE right of children with HI. They agreed these children have the right to be placed for non-academic subjects so that they can learn to accommodate in the mainstream extra-school community. One SET said:

"They have the right but would only be suitable for non-academic subject. Inclusion in non-academic subjects would permit children with HI to actively interact with mainstream children and thus learn how to accommodate themselves to mainstream society."

As for academic subjects, they still prefer these children to be educated in SECs by SETs.

Table 66: Right of children with SEN to IE			
Professional status	Have rights to IE		
	disagreed	Undecided	agreed
1. RMCTs	8	16	16
2. Headteachers.		2	1
3. SETs		16	7
4. RETs	1	2	3
Total	9	36	27
Note: 3 RMCTs and 1 SET declined to comment			

8.3.2 Perceived benefit of IE to children with SEN

Teachers were asked about the benefit of IE to children with SEN. All teachers mentioned the academic and social benefit of IE, but only some teachers interviewed expressed their opinion that some children with learning difficulties might experience a degree of personal support and emotional satisfaction if some mainstream children were to socialise with them.

8.3.2.1 Academic achievements of children with SEN

a. School with SECs (LD) that had tried placement

The headteacher and four RMCTs (one had tried placement) acknowledged that IE would increase the academic performance of children with LD because they can learn from their mainstream peers. For example, they could learn new words in everyday conversations. IE would also help children with LD to learn to concentrate on their work by following the example of mainstream children in the class. Besides they argued that the academic performance of children with LD is bound to improve even if they just copied the work of their mainstream peers. One RMCT (LD) said (Appendix 13, 8.2.3.1);

“In SECs maybe the other children in the classes are worse than him/her academically. In mainstream classes his/her neighbour could help him/her in his/her lessons. Even if these children with LD just copied what his/her mainstream friends do, eventually they would learn

something. Also he/she could learn to concentrate on their work when they see other children busy doing their work.”

The two SETs and eight RMCTs (two had tried placement) had mixed feelings. Two of the eight RMCTs were unsure because they had never taught children with LD. The other teachers noted that, when the school tried placement, the academic performance of some children with LD included in mainstream classes did improve. Therefore they claimed mainstream learning might have been conducive to the learning of some children with LD in improving their academic performance. They also reasoned that these children’s academic performance might improve if RMCTs teaching them could give them the attention they required, but would decline if given only minimal attention. Two RMCTs (one had tried placement) disagreed that IE would academically benefit children with LD because of the presumed inability of these children to cope with the pace of mainstream learning. RMCTs would not be able to give these children their full attention because of the large number of children in their classes. Appendix 13, 8.3.2.1:

“There could be two side effects. If RMCTs could provide for these children all the attention they require then maybe their academic achievement will improve. But if RMCTs are too occupied and busy with mainstream children and can only give minimal individual guidance to these children, then their academic progress will decline.”

b. Schools with SECs (LD)

Four SETs and one RMCT agreed that IE would improve the academic performance of children with LD. They said that regular classroom interaction between children with LD and mainstream children would increase the communication skills of children with LD. They felt this would incidentally increase some aspects of academic attainment. Also, they commented that the ability to learn socially from mainstream children would help to improve academic achievement. One SET said (Appendix 13, 8.3.2.1):

“From my experience with children with LD who regularly interact with mainstream children during break times and before/after schooling, their ability to communicate has improved. Their vocabularies have increased. If inclusion is being practised, my assumption is that there will be an improvement in their academic achievements.”

Three SETs and seven RMCTs were unsure. Four RMCTs were unsure because they had never taught children with LD. The other teachers said the academic performance of children

with LD might improve if RMCTs were able to provide the maximum individual attention required. IE, in their opinion, will not increase the academic performance of every child with LD because some of these children have serious intellectual shortcomings. One SET and four RMCTs disagreed that IE will improve the academic progress of children with LD because RMCTs do not have time to provide the individual attention required. They argued that RMCTs would always prioritise mainstream children's learning above that of children with LD. They also said that children with LD would not be able cope with the pace of mainstream learning. This was the opinion of one RMCT (LD) who said:

"From my experience, remedial education children when they are in remedial education class are very talkative. They are active in discussions with teachers and in their involvement in the lessons. But when they return to my mainstream class, they are quiet and timid. Based on this, maybe, it is better academically if these children are taught in SECs."

c. School with SECs (VI)

Two SETs agreed that the academic performance of children with VI will increase if included in mainstream classes because their intellectual abilities are equal to if not better than the majority of mainstream children (Appendix 13, 8.3.2.1):

"There are children with VI in SEC who have intellectual ability equal to if not better than the majority of mainstream children. Their academic achievement will surely increase."

The headteacher, four SETs and three RMCTs expressed mixed views. Two RMCTs were unsure because they had never taught children with VI. The rest of the teachers argued that, for children with VI who have 'normal' intellectual abilities, academic achievement might improve. But, for those who also suffered from mental disabilities IE would not help their academic progress. This was exemplified by the viewpoint of the SET (VI) who stated:

"If children with VI have normal intellectual ability they will be able to compete with mainstream children, and their academic performance should be better in mainstream classes. But lately children with VI sent to this school besides having VI are also suffering from other disabilities, like mental and physical disabilities. Those who also suffer from mental disabilities, even though not very severe, will not achieve much in terms of academic performance if included in mainstream classes."

It was also considered that IE might improve the academic attainments of children with VI if RMCTs are able to provide them with the individual attention they require. One SET and three RMCTs claimed these children's academic attainments could be improved if they are

taught in SECs because RMCTs do not have specific skills such as Braille to help them take notes. They also said that RMCTs do not have the appropriate skills to teach these children topics which require learning through sight. Besides they argued that children with VI would not be able to pace their learning to that of mainstream teaching.

d. Ordinary mainstream schools

One RET and one RMCT were of the opinion IE will increase the academic progress of children with SEN because they could learn from mainstream children, for example (Appendix 13, 8.3.2.1):

“When mixed together with mainstream children their thinking could be further developed compared to when they are being educated together with their own kind. They can always learn from mainstream children.”

One headteacher, two RETs and four RMCTs were unsure. This was expressed by one RET:

“Among themselves, they may feel they are lagging behind compared to other children in the special class. Thus they may be encouraged to try harder to catch up with each other. In mainstream classes they could simply give up because they could not keep up with mainstream children’s progress. But if these children with disabilities can be persuaded to do their best irrespective of other children’s achievements, and they can comfortably learn side by side with other mainstream children, then their academic achievement could better improve in mainstream classes compared to SECs.”

Three RMCTs were unsure because they had never taught children with SEN. The rest said the academic progress of children with SEN in mainstream classes would depend on the nature of their difficulties. They reasoned that children with VI might improve by being so placed, though this might be difficult for children with HI and LD. They also argued if children with SEN placed in mainstream classes could be convinced to do their best and not feel concerned by other children’s academic performances in the class, their academic attainments might improve since they would not have the added pressure to compete with mainstream children. Three RETs and five RMCTs disagreed that IE would improve these children’s academic achievements because in SECs they would be able to obtain the individual attention they needed and demanded. Also they reasoned that SETs are better equipped than are RMCTs to tackle these children’s academic difficulties:

"SETs are better trained to teach these children. They know what is required because they have been specially trained for the task. We RMCTs will teach them like other children, which might not be suitable. Maybe it is better academically if the child with mental disabilities in the school (assumed by the school) is taught by specialist teachers in special education."

e. Special education school (HI)

All seven SETs in the school were unsure of the ability of IE to improve the academic attainments of children with HI. They claimed their academic performance would not progress rapidly because RMCTs would have difficulty in conveying lessons to them. They also said RMCTs would always give preference to mainstream children's learning, thus neglecting children with HI. In SECs SETs could give the children the individual attention they needed because the size of SECs is at most 10 per class compared to 40 on average in mainstream classes. These views are seen in the statement of one SET (HI) in Appendix 13, 8.3.2.1:

"Their academic achievement would not progress rapidly because RMCTs would have difficulties in trying to make children with HI understand the lesson being taught due to unfamiliarity with sign language. In SECs, teachers not only have the ability to communicate with these children, they can also give more individual attention to them because the number of children in these SECs at the most are 10."

Table 67: Academic progress as the result of IE			
Professional status	Will improve		
	disagreed	Undecided	agreed
1. RMCTs	15	22	6
2. Headteachers		2	1
3. SETs	2	16	6
4. RETs	3	2	1
Total	20	42	14

8.3.2.2 Children with SEN, social development

All teachers interviewed either agreed or had mixed views on the benefits of IE to the social development of children with SEN.

a. School with SECs (LD) that had tried placement

The headteacher, two SETs and five RMCTs (four had tried placement) believed that IE would improve the social development of children with LD. Appendix 13, 8.3.2.2:

“Socially, the placement of children with LD was a success. These children were able to make friends with mainstream children, even though there are still those who tease these children with LD by calling them names.”

“Their social skills will develop because they will interact and socialise regularly with mainstream children, thus ensuring that they behave in a socially acceptable manner.”

They claimed the major success of the school’s placement project was the forging of positive relationships between children with LD and their mainstream peers. They said IE would enable children with LD to adapt themselves to mainstream children. Ten RMCTs had mixed opinions. They agreed the children’s social development might improve if (1) RMCTs were to play their part in encouraging meaningful relationship between mainstream children and children with LD, and (2) if mainstream children themselves were willing to accept children with LD.

b. Schools with SECs (LD)

Seven SETs and six RMCTs in the schools were confident that IE would improve the social skills of children with LD. Regular interaction would familiarise both mainstream children and children with LD with each other, thus giving children with LD opportunities to learn socially accepted behaviours from their mainstream peers. One RMCT said (Appendix 13, 8.3.2.2):

“If just among themselves, maybe there will not be much change in the social skills development of children with LD. But if included in mainstream classes it will make great improvements. They will tend to imitate mainstream peer behaviours, which hopefully are those that are socially acceptable.”

One SET and six RMCTs were unsure, two of the latter because they had never taught children with LD. The rest argued that the social skills of children with LD might improve if RMCTs play an active role in their development. Unwillingness of mainstream children to accept children with LD was also given as a reason for their uncertainty.

c. School with SECs (VI)

The headteacher, all seven SETs and four RMCTs agreed that IE will improve the social skills of children with VI. As one SET said, (Appendix 13 (8.3.2.2):

“When children with VI are exposed to mainstream children, and these children are willing to help them in whatever way they can, in both academic and non-academic fields, then children with VI will not be conscious of their disabilities and would be at ease mixing with mainstream society.”

IE could make both children with VI and mainstream children understand and accept each other, thus helping children with VI to learn to accommodate in mainstream society. The two RMCTs who were unsure said the social skills of children with VI might improve if mainstream children could be persuaded to forge a positive relationship with them. If not, social skills development in VI children could only come about from their contact with other VI children. Thus the role of the RMCTs is to ensure that this positive relationship actually happens:

“Hopefully RMCTs will encourage these children with VI to learn to accept the other children in the class. If not, then these children with VI would remain rooted in their seat.”

d. Ordinary mainstream schools

The headteacher, five RETs and five RMCTs had a positive view of the ability of IE to develop the social skills of children with SEN because regular interaction with mainstream children should facilitate socially acceptable behaviour. As one headteacher expressed it (Appendix 13, 8.3.2.2):

“The main way we can help our child who we think has mental disabilities is to improve his social skills. We can try to make him independent in managing himself, conscious of the communities around him, and know how to conduct himself when interacting with other people.”

And one RMCT stressed:

“The child regarded as having mental disabilities in the school gets along superbly with the other children. Socially he is just like any other child in the school.”

However one RET and five RMCTs had mixed opinions, and two RMCTs had mixed opinions because they had never taught children with SEN. The other teachers argued that social skills might improve if mainstream children could be encouraged to act as ‘role-models’ to children with SEN, and if RMCTs were willing to assist in their development.

e. Special education school (HI)

All SETs in the school believed that IE would help children with HI to improve their social skills of attending to, watching and attempting to respond to verbal communication offered to them by mainstream children. They also hoped that such responsitivity might be extended to social contacts with other children in the wider society, as suggested by the SET who said:

“They will be able to develop their social skills. Recently we had camping outings with mainstream children. They (children with HI) seem to get along fine with mainstream children even though they have lots of difficulty understanding each other.”

Table 68: Development of social skills as the result of IE			
Professional status	Will develop		
	disagreed	undecided	agreed
1. RMCTs		23	20
2. Headteachers			3
3. SETs		1	23
4. RETs		1	5
Total		25	51

8.3.2.3 The emotional development of children with SEN

During discussion with teachers on the issues of the probable developmental benefit of children with SEN as the result of IE, only 28 teachers interviewed were adjudged to have included emotional development in their discussions (see Table 69).

a. School with SECs (LD) that had tried placement

One RMCT claimed that IE would enhance the emotional development of children with LD because it would make these children feel accepted by the school's community, thus boosting their confidence: Appendix 13, 8.3.2.3:

"Including children with LD in mainstream classes would make them feel accepted."

However the two SETs and one RMCT expressed mixed views. On the positive side, IE would not make children with LD feel isolated and segregated. But mature children with LD might be embarrassed when placed in classes of children younger than themselves. They also argued that the confidence of children with LD would decline if they were placed in mainstream classes of high achievers. Besides this, they reasoned the self-esteem of children with LD would take a knock if efforts were not taken to prevent mainstream children from bullying them. This is expressed in the viewpoint of one SET (LD):

"Children with LD would not feel isolated and segregated from mainstream learning if they are able to mix with mainstream children for certain subjects in mainstream classes. But for children who are older and more mature, they do feel embarrassed when called 'handicapped child' by mainstream children.

Also children with LD would be made scapegoats for any wrong doing in the class. When we included children with LD in mainstream classes, if there was something improper happening in mainstream classes, like rubbish being thrown on the floor, children with LD would be accused, even though the culprits are mainstream children themselves."

Four RMCTs argued IE would only make children with LD feel more insecure and isolated because of bullying by mainstream children.

b. Schools with SECs (LD)

Two SETs were positive IE would widen the scope for unlimited emotional development within children with LD. One of these teachers offered a detailed account (Appendix 13, 8.3.2.2):

"For my special education classes I nominated six of the class children with LD as prefects to take care of the other children in SEC. They have the responsibilities to assist their friends in SEC during schools recess. This hopefully will make our children with LD feel independent and useful. So far they have done a good job in undertaking the roles expected of them. We also noticed that mainstream children showed tremendous respect to our prefects even though these children realised that these prefects are from SEC. For example when our

prefects reprimand mainstream children for littering, these mainstream children would pick up the litter that they had just thrown down and place it in the bin. This in a way helps to boost the self-esteem of children with LD. But it takes time and a lot of patience on our part to reach this stage of development. If this can be achieved in segregated settings, it could also be achieved if children with LD are included in mainstream classes."

Unrestricted interaction with mainstream children would increase the children's self-esteem. One RMCT who had mixed opinion felt these children's confidence might increase if they were placed in mainstream classes of low-achieving children but not in mainstream classes of high-achieving children. Another RMCT argued that IE would only make these children feel embarrassed and more aware of their shortcomings, thus demoralising them further.

c. School with SECs (VI)

One SET felt that IE would enhance the self-confidence of children with VI because of their acceptance by their mainstream peers. Three RMCTs were unsure. They reasoned children with VI who would cope with mainstream learning could be more confident in themselves, but those who encountered difficulties might suffer emotionally in mainstream classes. Three SETs and one RMCT stated that IE would demoralise these children because they will be made more aware of their handicaps:

"Emotionally they would be demoralised because other children can see and they can't."

They also feared these children would be victimised.

d. Ordinary mainstream schools

Two RETs and two RMCTs in the schools agreed that children with SEN would be more emotionally secure if they are placed in mainstream classes. Being able to learn and mix with mainstream children would increase their self-esteem. This is expressed by one RET (Appendix 13, 8.3.2.2):

"Maybe initially children with disabilities would feel humble, embarrassed and at times isolated when included in mainstream classes. Once they feel they are being accepted by both mainstream children and RMCTs they will have confidence in themselves and will like mainstream children better."

The headteacher had reservations. He felt that at phase 1 primary these children would be less aware of their disabilities, but at phase 2 they would be more conscious of it. This might make IE more difficult emotionally for older children. Two RMCTs stated that children with

SEN would be demoralised emotionally if placed in mainstream classes because of their inability to emulate their mainstream peers:

“When other children can, and they can’t, they would be demoralised.”

e. Special education school (HI)

None of the school’s SETs were adjudged to have mentioned the emotional development of children with HI in their discussions.

Table 69: Emotional development as the result of IE			
Professional status	Emotional development will enhance		
	disagreed	undecided	agreed
1. RMCTs	8	5	3
2. Headteachers		1	
3. SETs	4	2	3
4. RETs			2
Total	12	8	8

8.3.3 Perceived suitability of the National New Primary Schools’ Curriculum (KBSR) for the education of children with SEN

As noted (see section 1.2.3) during the time of this study children with LD in SECs were taught a different primary school curriculum from that of mainstream children. This curriculum was specifically formulated by the Special Education Unit for children with LD under the Ministry’s special education programme. Children with VI and HI are taught the normal KBSR curriculum (see Table 70).

a. School with SECs (LD) that had tried placement

The two SETs and two RMCTs agreed that KBSR with modifications is suitable for children with LD. The headteacher and eleven RMCTs (four had tried placement) were unsure. They argued that phase 1 syllabuses which emphasize the acquisition of basic literacy and

numeracy skills might be suitable, but phase 2 syllabuses would not. One RMCT (LD) teacher reported (Appendix 13, 8.3.3.):

“For primary I mathematics curriculum that I used to teach these children with LD, some of its copies are suitable and some are not. What amazed me was that they were able to answer some maths questions which I considered hard, and at times not able to solve the questions I regarded as easy.”

Others reasoned that subjects that demanded high intellectual ability, especially academically oriented subjects, might not be suitable, but subjects which have a strong emphasis on skill acquisition (non-academic subjects) might be suitable for these children. Thus another RMCT teacher reported:

“Subjects which require high intellectual abilities are not suitable for these children with LD. Subjects that require the use of physical skills like non-academic subjects are o.k. for these children. For example in weaving, these children’s handiwork is much better than that produced by my mainstream children.”

Two RMCTs argued that KBSR subjects demand high intellectual ability which children with LD are not capable of, and also there are too many subjects required by the KBSR, for example:

“Nowadays children are required to learn too many subjects. As it is, even mainstream children have problems coping with it, and especially children with LD in this school”.

b. Schools with SECs (LD)

All SETs and eight RMCTs had mixed views. They agreed that KBSR non-academic subjects might be suitable for children with LD but academic subjects might not. Academic subjects, especially languages and mathematics might be too difficult for these children. In the words of one SET (LD), Appendix 13 (8.3.3):

“For non-academic subjects it is suitable. But for academic subjects like Bahasa Malaysia (Malay Language) or mathematics, it is a bit difficult for children with LD. These children are very slow in their learning. This makes it difficult to teach these subjects to them at a high level of primary education.”

Four RMCTs disagreed with the proposition that KBSR is suitable for children with LD because these children’s main educational priorities are the acquisition of self-help skills and personal self-management, and therefore KBSR would be too difficult for them.

c. School with SECs (VI)

All SETs and five RMCTs said KBSR is suitable for children with VI. They claimed that all that is required is to transform the contents of every subject into Braille and shapes that can be distinguished using tactile and/or auditory sense. Also they commented that children with VI are currently being taught KBSR subjects just like mainstream children. But they admitted that for certain topics that involve observations, these children would just have to accept what teachers or their mainstream peers were telling them. As reported by one SET:

“It is suitable, but in certain subjects like science, especially those that involve observing an experiment, we have to verbalise what actually happens. It might be difficult at first for them to grasp the concept but with frequent listening they will eventually get the idea.”

The headteacher and one RMCT had mixed views. Their argument was that KBSR is only suitable for children with VI with ‘normal’ intellectual abilities, but not for those with mental disabilities as well. For children with both VI and LD phase 1 but not phase 2 syllabuses might be suitable. They also agreed that subjects that require learning by sight, might be difficult to teach to children with VI.

d. Ordinary mainstream schools

Every teacher in these schools expressed mixed opinions on the suitability of KBSR for children with SEN. They believed some subjects in the KBSR are suitable, whilst others are not. Suitability of the KBSR is also conditional upon the types of disabilities these children have. All teachers perceived that KBSR might be too difficult for children with LD but should be manageable for children with VI and HI. But they agreed KBSR non-academic subjects such as art, music and physical education could be suitable for children with LD.

e. Special educational school (HI)

All SETs in the school conceded that the standards of KBSR academic subjects, which have to be taught to children with HI, may be too high for them. But KBSR non-academic subjects should be suitable for these children. As one SET said (Appendix 13, 8.3.3):

“We feel the academic section of KBSR syllabus is too demanding for our children with HI, but we have no choice because we must subscribe to the directives of the Education Ministry to teach according to this syllabus.”

Table 70 : Suitability of KBSR for children with SEN			
Professional status	Is suitable		
	disagreed	Undecided	agreed
1. RMCTs	6	30	7
2. Headteachers.		3	
3. SETs		15	9
4. RETs		6	
Total	6	54	16

8.3.4 Perceived effect of IE on teachers' workload

Teachers interviewed were unanimous that IE would increase their workload. For example one headteacher observed (Appendix 13, 8.3.4):

"If teachers were to teach children with LD like any other children in the class, there would not be much increase in their everyday teaching workload. But the official requirement is that the daily educational progress of children with LD needs to be recorded, and this would definitely increase teachers' present workload. Teachers also have to put in extra effort to control and teach children with LD included in their class. They also have to give special attention to these children's educational needs, which might necessitate using different teaching strategies to those usually employed."

The RMCTs reasoned they would have to prepare special teaching and learning materials even if only one of these children with SEN is placed in their class. This would definitely mean extra work for them. As one RMCT said:

"Presently, teachers are required to prepare three different types of work exercises for three groups of different achievers in the class. With the inclusion of these children with LD there will be a fourth to be done."

Besides lesson preparations, RMCTs said they would have to lavish extra attention on children with SEN to make up for their slowness in learning. This extra attention would result in RMCTs not being able to finish teaching the required syllabuses within the allotted time. The latest requirements in special education are that all children with SEN need to have an individual education plan, and teachers interviewed admitted this would greatly increase their teaching responsibilities. Virtually all teachers had concerns to express e.g. one SET (HI):

"As it is teachers are not only expected to teach. They are also required to be involved in co-curriculum activities, clerical work concerning the children in the class, and other

extracurricular activities at the district, state and sometimes at the national levels. If children with disabilities are also included in their classes, and the latest requirement is that every child with disabilities must have an individualised education plan, the RMCT would have a heart attack."

And one RMCT from an ordinary school raised the point:

"Teachers have to give extra attention to the only child with mental disabilities (assumed by the school concerned) in the school. Often with this child, teachers have to prepare learning materials that are totally different to those we give the other children in the class."

And there are also new practical concerns, as from one RMCT (LD):

"These children with LD need special attention from class teachers. For example, if they want to go to the toilet, the class teachers have to escort them, which results in teachers having to leave the class for a short while."

8.3.5 Perceived effect of IE on mainstream children

Teachers were asked to express their views on the effect of IE on mainstream children's academic progress, on the ability of mainstream children to display 'caring feeling', and their acceptance of children with SEN (see Table 71).

8.3.5.1 Mainstream children's academic progress

a. School with SECs (LD) that had tried placement

The two SETs and eight RMCTs (two had tried placement) agreed that IE would not have a negative effect on mainstream children's academic progress because (1) RMCTs will teach normally with or without IE, and (2) mainstream children do not have learning difficulties and thus would be able to learn normally. The headteacher and four RMCTs (one had tried placement) were unsure. If IE involves only phase 1 primary, it might not negatively affect the academic attainments of mainstream children. But if it also involves phase 2 primary, then it might have negative effects because at this stage of primary schooling RMCTs' priorities are academic attainments and the presence of children with LD could be a distraction to mainstream children. They also argued that if RMCTs could apportion their teaching time appropriately, mainstream children's academic progress might not be negatively affected. Three RMCTs (one had tried placement) claimed IE would negatively affect

mainstream children's academic progress because the special attention demanded by children with LD would make it difficult for RMCTs to finish their syllabuses in the stipulated time. This would result in mainstream children not being able to answer examination questions not taught by the class teachers. This would inadvertently lower mainstream children's achievements in included classes compared to non-included classes. To quote in full the experience of one mainstream maths teacher (Appendix 13, 8.3.5.1):

LD placement had an affect on mainstream children's academic progress because I had to reallocate my teaching time to overcome the learning difficulties of children with LD. If these children with LD don't understand, I have to put in extra effort to make them understand and this affected my progress in finishing the syllabuses. When I don't finish the syllabuses, mainstream children would not be able to answer some of the questions in the school mid-term and end of the year examinations. Thus their examination results are lower than primary children in the other classes."

b. Schools with SECs (LD)

Seven SETs and three RMCTs admitted that IE would not negatively affect mainstream children's academic progress because normal teaching would proceed as usual, and also mainstream children have 'normal' intellectual abilities. One SET and five RMCTs had mixed views. They said it might not have a negative effect if children with LD included in mainstream classes were free from behavioural problems that would distract mainstream children's learning. As one SET (LD) said (Appendix 13 (8.3.5.1):

"Maybe it will negatively affect mainstream children's academic progress slightly if children with LD have some kinds of behavioural problems. Their behaviours in the class could cause distractions to mainstream children's concentration."

IE might have a limited negative effect if it involves phase 1 primary education only. Four RMCTs argued IE would have negative effects on mainstream children's learning because the special attention required by children with (LD) would restrict the amount of time RMCTs spent with mainstream children.

c. School with SECs (VI)

The headteacher, five SETs and four RMCTs in the school said IE would not have a negative effect on mainstream children's academic achievements because RMCTs will still try to finish their syllabuses on time. This would affect the academic performance of children with VI

rather than mainstream children. But mainstream children who socialise with VI children and who indeed may be chosen to act as helpers to VI children (reading aloud to them for Braille purposes) would increase their understanding or reinforce their knowledge on the subjects read. As one SET said:

“Mainstream children who act as readers (who read to children with VI for Braille purposes) would benefit academically because reading to these children would enhance their knowledge of the subjects read.”

Two SETs and two RMCTs felt that IE would have a negative effect on mainstream children’s academic attainments because RMCTs would spend more time than usual on the children with VI, thus depriving mainstream children of teaching time.

d. Ordinary mainstream schools

The headteacher, five RETs and eight RMCTs disagreed that IE would have negative effects on mainstream children’s academic achievements because to them mainstream children are intellectually ‘normal’. In fact they argued that by assisting children with SEN in their learning, mainstream children’s knowledge could be further reinforced. One RET (Appendix 13, 8.3.5.1) said:

“When mainstream children help children with disabilities, they increase their understanding of the subject matter or concepts. This would enhance their academic performance rather than diminishing it”.

They added that probable disturbances in the classes due to the placement of children with SEN in mainstream classes would not unduly affect mainstream children’s learning. One RET and two RMCTs argued that IE will have a negative effect on mainstream children’s academic achievements because teachers would have to spend more time with children with SEN and less time with mainstream children. One RMCT acknowledged:

“If these children with LD have abnormal behaviour and like to disturb mainstream children, then these children would keep their distance from them. If they don’t have such awkward behaviours, maybe they could accept them in their class.”

e. Special education school (HI)

Five SETs in the school disagreed that IE of children with HI would negatively affect mainstream children’s academic achievements because normal teaching would continue as

usual. They also argued the desire of mainstream children not to be upstaged by children with HI would make them work harder, thus increasing their attainments. Two SETs agreed that IE would have negative effects on mainstream children's academic progress because RMCTs have to accord extra special attention to children with HI and thus have to shorten their time spent with mainstream children.

Table 71: Effect of IE on mainstream children learning			
Professional status	Will negatively effect		
	disagreed	undecided	agreed
1. RMCTs	23	9	11
2. Headteachers	2	1	
3. SETs	19	1	4
4. RETs	5		1
Total	49	11	16

8.3.5.2 Perceived ability of IE on promoting a 'caring feeling' and acceptance of children with SEN by mainstream children

Teachers either had mixed opinions or agreed that IE would promote a 'caring feeling' and acceptance of children with SEN amongst mainstream children. Two teachers argued that 'caring feeling' and acceptance could be encouraged even without IE (Table 72).

a. School with SECs (LD) that had tried placement

The headteacher and five RMCTs (one had tried placement) argued that IE would make mainstream children more caring and accepting of children with LD. The relationship between these two sets of children in the class would probably be difficult at first, but eventually mainstream children would be able to accept children with LD as their understanding of these children's difficulties increased. The two SETs and ten RMCTs (three had tried placement) had mixed views. They said that 'caring feeling' and acceptance of children with LD by mainstream children might increase if RMCTs are active in promoting it. Their reservation was also due to their opinion that there are mainstream children who will never accept these children, even with encouragement. They feared that these mainstream

children would be more prone to bully than to help children with LD. They also expressed the views that a ‘caring feeling’ and acceptance of children with LD would be difficult to promote if children with LD behaved ‘abnormally’. The headteacher, SETs and four RMCTs (who were involved in the school’s placement programme) claimed the major success of the school’s placement project was the forging of positive relationship between children with LD included in mainstream classes with the majority of their mainstream peers in the class.

b. Schools with SECs (LD)

Five SETs and four RMCTs said IE would help to promote acceptance and ‘caring feeling’ amongst mainstream children due to their increased understanding of children with LD problems. One SET (LD) said (Appendix 13, 8.3.5.2):

“There will always be a section of mainstream children who will use derogatory remarks to describe children with LD included in mainstream classes. But if teachers play their part in preventing this from happening, mainstream children will eventually accept these children with LD.”

Three SETs and seven RMCTs had mixed feelings. They argued that acceptance and a ‘caring feeling’ might be promoted if RMCTs are active in its promotion. But they also realised there will always be a section of mainstream children who would make derogatory remarks to children with LD, and, if given the chance, would try to bully them. One RMCT interviewed said that even without an acceptance of IE ‘caring feeling’ could be fostered in mainstream children if the schools made a great effort to involve both sets of children in activities outside the classroom (Appendix 13, 8.3.5.2):

“Even though these children with LD and mainstream children are not learning in the same class, we can still encourage the ‘caring feeling’ among mainstream children. The school frequently arranged activities for our children with LD and in all these activities we involved mainstream children as well. From my everyday observation, mainstream children can get along very well with our children with LD.”

c. School with SECs (VI)

Four SETs and two RMCTs believed that IE would promote acceptance and ‘caring feeling’ amongst mainstream children towards children with VI. They claimed that mainstream children have been very helpful to children with VI. Mainstream children have been known

to read notes to children with VI to enable them to Braille it, and also to assist them in other school chores. For example (Appendix 13, 8.3.5.2):

“From my observations, mainstream children are very concerned about children with VI in this school. For example, mainstream children would take turns reading lesson notes so that children with VI can Braille it. When it's time for praying, mainstream children would always come to fetch children with VI from the hostel to take them to the mosque.”

IE would therefore reinforce this ‘caring feeling’ in mainstream children. From their observation they claimed the two children with moderate VI who were placed in mainstream classes had been well accepted by their mainstream peers. The headteacher, three SETs and four RMCTs were unsure because they argued that there will always be mainstream children who would play tricks on these children, and thus make them more isolated from their mainstream peers. But if RMCTs are able to prevent this and are willing to promote the ‘caring feeling’ then mainstream children’s acceptance of children with VI might increased.

d. Ordinary mainstream school

Four RETs and six RMCTs in the schools were confident that IE would help to promote acceptance and a ‘caring feeling’ in mainstream children. They reasoned that actual experience of interacting with children with SEN would make mainstream children more aware of children with SEN difficulties, thus making them more sympathetic. The headteacher, two RETs and three RMCTs who had mixed views claimed that for some mainstream children IE might make them more accepting and caring of children with SEN, but some will be tempted to bully these children. The headteacher said:

“There would be mixed acceptance by mainstream children towards children with disabilities. There would be one section of mainstream children who could accept children with disabilities, make friends with them, help them, and realise how lucky they are. But there is also a section of mainstream children who would tease and bully them.”

This ‘caring feeling’ and acceptance of children with SEN would also depend on RMCTs’ acceptance of children with SEN in their classes. If RMCTs were positive towards IE, then mainstream children would probably reflect that attitude too. If RMCTs are negative then the chances were that mainstream children would reject children with SEN in the class.

e. Special education school (HI)

Four SETs in the school agreed that IE would promote acceptance and a ‘caring feeling’ in mainstream children towards children with HI due to better understanding of these children’s difficulties. Three SETs had reservations. They argued in one aspect it might make mainstream children more caring and accepting because of a better understanding of these children’s problems. But they were also worried that children with HI would be more isolated and segregated because of their inability to articulate their thoughts to mainstream children. They were also worried a section of mainstream children would ridicule children with HI in mainstream classes.

Table 72: Ability of IE to produce ‘caring feeling’ and acceptance			
Professional status	Generate ‘caring-feeling’ and acceptance		
	disagreed	Undecided	agreed
1. RMCTs		24	17
2. Headteachers		2	1
3. SETs		11	13
4. RETs		2	4
Total		39	35
Note: 2 RMCTs said acceptance and ‘caring-feeling’ can be generated even without IE			

8.3.6 Perceived effect of IE on schools’ performance in National Primary Schools’ Test (UPSR) examination

Every primary school child is required to sit the UPSR examination at the end of primary 6 (see section 3.2.6). The State Education Department’s yearly appraisal of mainstream primary schools uses the school’s performance in this examination in its evaluation. It ranks mainstream primary schools in a table based on the percentage of UPSR passes. A high position in the table indicates good performance. Evaluating mainstream schools using UPSR has resulted in headteachers being pressured to produce excellent results. The Federated Schools’ Inspectorate would visit schools which slip drastically down the table or are positioned at the bottom of the table.

a. School with SECs (LD) that had tried placement

The headteacher and two SETs claimed that IE would have no bearing on the school's UPSR ranking because the results of children with LD would be separated from those of mainstream children. This was not known to RMCTs in the school because all the RMCTs interviewed were unhappy about IE lowering the school's performance in the UPSR examination. Three RMCTs who were unsure reasoned that if the number of children with LD sitting the examination is very small in relation to the number of mainstream children then the effect would be negligible. But it might have a negative effect if the number of children with LD is substantial and they fail the examination. Twelve RMCTs (four had tried placement) considered that IE would lower the school's UPSR performance. They argued that children with LD in the school have very poor academic capabilities, and would never be able to attain the academic level required to pass the UPSR.

b. Schools with SECs (LD)

All eight SETs believed that IE would not have any effect on UPSR performance because they knew that the results of children with LD are not included in the school's UPSR ranking. But all twelve RMCTs felt that IE would lower the schools' UPSR performance because children with LD could never achieve the standard of academic attainments required to pass the UPSR. Again it seems in these schools that the information that the UPSR result of children with LD would be separated from mainstream children is not known to RMCTs.

c. School with SECs (VI)

In this school teachers interviewed said that the UPSR results of children with VI had always been included when calculating the school's UPSR position. Thus IE would make no difference to the school's performance. Teachers claimed there were several occasions in the past when the results of children with VI helped to enhance the school's performance because there had been children with VI whose intellectual abilities were as good as if not better than the majority of mainstream children. The report of their headteacher was (Appendix 13, 8.3.6):

"In this school we combine UPSR results of both children with VI and mainstream children when calculating our percentage of passes. Last year it did negatively affect our results because children with VI sitting for UPSR failed it. But the previous year it enhanced our

results because children with VI obtained good results. Therefore it depends on the children's intellectual abilities."

d. Ordinary mainstream schools

Two RETs said that IE would not negatively affect the schools' UPSR performance because there are children with SEN who are as intellectually able as mainstream children:

"Some children with disabilities are very intelligent and can perform better in UPSR than mainstream children."

The headteacher and two RMCTs had reservations. They argued it depends on the child's disabilities. Maybe it will lower UPSR percentages of passes if the children have LD, but probably not if they have VI or HI. Thus IE it was felt could either lower or increase schools' UPSR performances. Four RETs and eight RMCTs agreed IE would lower the schools' UPSR performance because children with SEN would have difficulties attaining academic standards high enough to pass the UPSR, especially children with LD. Children with LD were also perceived as having lower intellectual abilities compared to remedial educational needs children, and the majority of these remedial children had failed their UPSR in the past.

e. Special education school (HI)

All seven SETs in the school agreed that placing children with HI in mainstream schools would lower the schools' UPSR performance because the special schools' record showed no child with HI had ever in the past passed all the UPSR subjects.

Table 73: Effect of IE in school percentages of UPSR examination			
Professional status	Will negatively effect percentages		
	disagreed	Undecided	agreed
1. RMCTs	6	5	32
2. Headteachers	2	1	
3. SETs	17		7
4. RETs	2		4
Total	27	6	43

8.3.7 Suggestions about alternative methods of evaluating mainstream schools' yearly performance if they practise IE

Teachers were requested to suggest alternative methods for evaluating the annual performance of mainstream primary schools if they were to practise IE but avoiding using UPSR as a measure. Of the teachers 23 were unable or reluctant to make any suggestion. Those who did so offered the following recommendations:

- 1) Percentages of UPSR passes in mainstream schools practising IE should not include the result of any type of child with SEN (29).
- 2) The evaluation of educational progress of children with SEN should use a different frame of reference (20). It was suggested that the educational progress of children with SEN at the beginning of the year should be compared to their progress at the end of the year. If their progress is adjudged by a selected committee to have improved substantially, then they should be considered to have passed the UPSR. Teachers also suggested that the educational progress of children with SEN should include both academic and non-academic achievements. Children who participate in sporting and cultural activities at district, state and national level should have that taken into consideration as part of their evaluation. This would encourage mainstream schools not only to accept children with SEN in mainstream classes, but also most importantly at the normal, initial stage of entry into the school itself. Such suggestions were made by one SET (LD) who had tried placement (Appendix 13, 8.3.7):

"Evaluate the educational progress of children with LD at the beginning of the year and compare it with what they have achieved at the end of the year. If their progress is satisfactory, then consider them as candidates that have passed. In this way schools would be encouraged to accept these children not only in mainstream classes but most importantly into the schools themselves."

- 3) Teachers recommended that credits be given to mainstream schools with good IE practice (13). For example does the school have a committee to determine the educational plan for individual children with SEN? Does the committee represent all interested parties in the education of the individual child with SEN? Have these

children been involved in social and extra-curricular activities organized by the schools, and what is the extent of their involvement? If the answers are affirmative, then the schools should be recognised for this. Such proposals were made by one SET(VI):

“The success of children with VI education should not be based solely on their UPSR results. It should also take into account these children’s achievements in other fields. For example, their involvement in representing the school in sports and cultural activities at district, state and national level. Children with VI in this school are heavily involved in these activities. This should also be referred to when assessing the educational success of these children, and credit be given to the school for this achievement.”

8.3.8 Types of children with SEN favoured by primary teachers for IE

Teachers were asked to nominate types of children with SEN under the Ministry’s special education programme whom they perceived as suitable for IE (see Table 74). There were two reasons given by teachers for their nominations:

1. Teachers who favoured children with LD the most assumed that RMCTs have the required skills to teach these children because of their ability to hear and see. They perceived RMCTs as not being able to teach children with HI and VI because they lack sign language and Braille skills.
2. Teachers who nominated children with VI and HI ahead of children with LD perceived these children as having intellectual abilities equal to mainstream children. These teachers also felt that children with LD and behavioural problems would be difficult to include in mainstream classes.

a. School with SECs (LD) that had tried placement

The headteacher, two SETs and six RMCTs favoured the placement of children with LD ahead of children with VI and HI. One RMCT nominated children with VI as most suitable, and four RMCTs said children with HI were most suitable for IE. Teachers who nominated children with HI claimed they are intellectually able, and being able to see would make it easy

for them to move freely in the classroom, and also to read what was being written on the board. Teachers who favoured children with VI and HI rated children with LD as being the least suitable for IE. Four RMCTs said all three types of children with SEN are unsuitable for IE.

b. Schools with SECs (LD)

Four SETs and nine RMCTs rated children with LD as being suitable for placement in mainstream classes and rated children with VI and HI as being equally unsuitable. For example one RMCT (LD) said (Appendix 13, 8.3.8):

“I prefer children with LD because they can hear and see. As for children with HI and VI, I do not have the skills in sign language and Braille. I can live with children with LD because even though they are slow in grasping the concept I am teaching, if persisted with they will eventually learn something by hearing and seeing.”

Three SETs and two RMCTs rated children with VI as being most suitable, followed by children with HI. Children with LD were rated third by these teachers in terms of suitability. One RMCT declined to nominate, and one SET felt all three types of children with SEN are suitable for IE.

c. Schools with SECs (VI)

The headteacher, five SETs and four RMCTs nominated children with VI as their favourite for IE, and children with LD were deemed to be the most unsuitable. Two RMCTs chose children with HI as being the most suitable because they perceived them as being both intellectually able and free from visual handicap. These teachers also rated children with LD as unsuitable. Only one SET chose children with LD as being most suitable for IE. One SET said all three types of children with SEN are unsuitable for IE.

d. Ordinary mainstream schools

The headteacher and five RMCTs nominated children with LD as being suitable for IE in their schools because they do not have appropriate educational facilities for children with VI and HI. They also claimed RMCTs in the schools do not have the skills in Braille and sign language to teach these children. Teachers interviewed stated that RMCTs in the schools

might be able to use remedial education techniques to teach children with LD included in their classes. These teachers also rated equally the unsuitability of children with VI and HI for IE. Five RETs and four RMCTs chose children with VI as being the most suitable and children with LD as the least suitable. One RET claimed all three types of children with SEN were suitable and one RMCT was unsure. One RMCT from ordinary school offered the comment:

“Intellectually there are children with VI who have succeeded in their educational quest and earned university degrees. I haven't heard of children with HI entering university, but there are those who are now studying in higher secondary education. As for children with LD it will be a great achievement for them if they can acquire skills to help them survive this modern society.”

e. Special education school (HI)

All seven SETs in the school nominated children with VI as being most suitable followed by children with HI. Third were children with LD. One SET was proud to report (Appendix 13, 8.3.8):

“We have a living proof that children with VI could achieve a high level of academic achievements. There is one professor at the University of Malaysia who is visually impaired”.

Table 74: Children with SEN most favoured for IE			
Professional status	Most favoured for IE		
	LD	VI	HI
1. RMCTs	20	11	6
2. Headteachers	2	1	
3. SETs	7	15	
4. RETs		5	
Total	29	32	6
Notes: 4 RMCTs and 1 SET said all three types are not suitable. 1 RMCT was unsure, and 1 RMCT declined to nominate. 1 RET and 1 SET said all three are suitable.			

8.4 Conative component of attitude

8.4.1 Perceived RMCTs support for IE implementation (See Table 75 for teacher responses)

a. School with SECs (LD) that had tried placement

The headteacher and two SETs had mixed perceptions of RMCTs' willingness to support IE implementation, even though the school had tried placement (1995-1996). The headteacher felt RMCTs would reject IE initially but could be persuaded to accept it eventually if they are given enough information about it, and if the Ministry of Education persevered with the programme. The two SETs had the perception that RMCTs might be willing to support IE if the headteacher gave full support to its implementation. The headteacher should continuously stress the importance of the programme to RMCTs. Eight RMCTs (two had tried placement) were unwilling to support IE because they felt that present conditions in the school were not conducive to its implementation, and it would benefit neither group of children educationally. They also argued IE would be too demanding of their teaching abilities because they were not trained in special education. Four RMCTs (two had tried placement) were unsure. They said they might be willing to support it if: (1) IE is implemented at phase 1 primary, (2) the majority of teachers in the school also support it, (3) children with LD are ready to be placed in mainstream classes, and (4) the headteacher gives his/her full backing to the programme. Two RMCTs were willing to support IE for humanitarian reasons, and one RMCT declined to comment. Typical illustrative comments were (Appendix 13, 8.4.1):

"If other teachers support the programme, I will support it. If I am alone I am not so sure. If there are others who are willing, we can sort of help each other morally and educationally"
And: "I guess I will support the programme for humanitarian reasons."

b. Schools with SECs (LD)

Two SETs stated that RMCTs in the schools would be unwilling to support IE because it is too demanding a responsibility. Two SETs were unsure because they argued there are RMCTs who might support it and there are also those who might not. RMCTs might not be willing to support IE because generally they do not know much about it, but might be willing to give it a try if more information about IE implementation were known to them. Four SETs

said RMCTs in the school would support IE for humanitarian reasons, and they also noted that RMCTs had been supportive of any activities involving children with LD in the schools. Six RMCTs expressed their objection because they argued they are not trained to teach children with LD. They perceived IE to be too taxing on their teaching responsibilities. Three RMCTs were willing to support IE for humanitarian reasons. Three RMCTs declined to comment. One SET offered the comment (Appendix 13, 8.4.1):

“Not all RMCTs will support the inclusion of children with LD, but I think they will support the programme if they have a deep understanding of it.”

c. School with SECs (VI)

The headteacher considered that RMCTs in the school would be willing to support the placement of children with VI in mainstream classes because they were able to accept the placement of the two children with moderate VI. She also stressed that RMCTs would be willing to support IE if they were well informed about IE implementation. Six SETs who had mixed perceptions about RMCTs’ willingness said some RMCTs might be willing to support IE, whilst others might not. They agreed with the headteacher that RMCTs might be reluctant to support IE because they knew very little about it. One SET declined to comment. Two RMCTs opposed IE because they were not trained to teach children with VI. Also the present conditions in the school could not support IE implementation. Two RMCTs who were unsure about their willingness to support IE said they needed more information about it before they could make up their mind. Two RMCTs declined to comment. One considered comment from a RMCT (VI) was (Appendix 13, 8.4.1):

“This is a new concept in mainstream primary education. I need to know more about it before I can make up my mind to support or not to support its implementation.”

d. Ordinary mainstream schools

The headteacher believed that RMCTs in his school would oppose IE because it would be too taxing on their teaching responsibilities. He argued that RMCTs are facing enough problems with mainstream children’s learning and do not need extra responsibilities. All six RETs had mixed views on RMCTs’ willingness to support IE. RMCTs might be willing to support IE if: (1) the schools’ headteachers totally support the programme, and (2) it involves phase 1 primary only because at this phase of primary education RMCTs’ main concern would be the

acquisition of basic literacy and numeracy. RMCTs at phase 2 primary would be so preoccupied with good performance in UPSR that they would be most unlikely to support it. Five RMCTs opposed the programme implementation because it would interfere with the normal learning and teaching process. They were not trained to teach children with SEN, and their schools were inappropriately equipped. IE would put too much pressure on already pressurised RMCTs. Four RMCTs were willing to support IE implementation on humanitarian grounds. They argued that IE would need to be put to the test first in order to determine its success or failure. One RMCT declined to comment. One general comment from one RMCT in an ordinary mainstream school:

"I will support it because if we don't try, we won't know."

e. Special education school (HI)

Five SETs believed that RMCTs in mainstream schools would be reluctant to support IE because of their inability to communicate with children with HI. They would need to undertake extra work to prepare lessons. Representative of this viewpoint was the comment:

"Very few will support IE because of their inability to communicate with children with HI, and also it will result in an increase in the teachers' teaching burden."

Two SETs refused to comment.

Table 75: RMCTs willingness to support IE			
Professional status	Willingness to support IE implementation		
	No	Undecided	Yes
1. RMCTs	21	6	9
RMCT willingness as perceived by:			
2. Headteacher	1	1	1
3. SETs	7	10	4
4. RETs		6	
Total	29	23	14
Notes: No comments, 7 RMCTs, 3 SETs			

8.4.2 Perceived willingness of RMCTs to attend in-service training in special education

a. School with SECs (LD) that had tried placement

The headteacher and two SETs were sceptical about RMCTs' willingness to attend training in special education. The headteacher claimed they would be willing to attend only if someone in their family had SEN, but not otherwise. They also said that RMCTs in general are not interested in the education of children with LD. Five RMCTs (two had tried placement) were reluctant to attend training in special education because of: (1) family commitments (training college is too far from home), (2) having no patience to teach children with LD, (3) not being interested in teaching these children since they had been teaching mainstream children for a long time, and (4) one of them being on the verge of retirement. Three RMCTs (one had tried placement) were undecided. They said they would not volunteer to attend in-service training in special education, but would go if directed by the State Education Department. One form of anxiety and self-doubt is exemplified by the RMCT who said (Appendix 13, 8.4.2):

"If directed I will go. But I won't volunteer to go. If I volunteer the authorities would have high expectations of me. What if I could not deliver what is expected after attending the course? I should not have gone in the first place because personally I just don't have what it takes to teach these children."

Seven RMCTs expressed their willingness to attend in-service training because it would widen the scope of their teaching abilities (see Table 76).

b. Schools with SECs (LD)

Three SETs had the perception that RMCTs would be reluctant to attend in-service training because of family commitments. They claimed the training college was too far from home, and the one-year course duration too long. They believed that RMCTs were not interested in the education of children with LD. Four SETs with mixed perceptions said that there are RMCTs who might be interested in attending but their number would be few. They reasoned that RMCTs might be willing to attend in-service training if they are given more information on IE, and if the course duration were shorter. Only one SET felt that RMCTs would be willing to attend in-service training in order to vary their teaching skills. Ten RMCTs

expressed unwillingness to attend in-service training because of personal commitments and because they were not interested in teaching children with LD. One of them was unwilling because she would be shortly retiring. Two RMCTs were willing to attend training in special education in order to diversify their teaching abilities. One comment which merits attention came from the SET (LD) who said:

“If RMCTs are given information on inclusion programme beforehand, they might be interested. What makes teachers reluctant to attend special education courses is that they are unsure what they are getting themselves into. If they have a rough idea of what this programme is about, maybe they can be persuaded to attend courses in special education.”

c. School with SECs (VI)

The headteacher believed that very few RMCTs would be willing to attend in-service training because of the difficulties of teaching children with VI. But she also admitted that two to three RMCTs in her school would be willing to accept children with VI in their classes, if given appropriate training. Four SETs had the perception that RMCTs would be reluctant to attend in-service training because of: (1) family commitments, and (2) the long duration of the course. Three SETs who were unsure reasoned that only RMCTs interested in teaching children with VI would be willing to attend in-service training but, like the headteacher, they admitted that their numbers are very small. RMCTs might be willing to undergo training if the course duration were shortened considerably, and if more information about IE were known to them. Two RMCTs interviewed in the school were reluctant to attend training because of family commitments and lack of interest in teaching children with VI. Four RMCTs were willing because they wanted to learn new teaching skills:

“I will go because I can learn something different. Previously I learned how to teach mainstream children, and this time I am learning how to teach children with VI.”

d. Ordinary mainstream schools

The headteacher claimed that RMCTs in his school are unwilling to attend in-service training because in the past they were not receptive to attending such training. All six SETs expressed mixed opinions. They argued that RMCTs might be willing to attend the in-service training if the length of the course were shortened, and if appropriate information on IE were given to RMCTs. They also felt very few RMCTs were interested in teaching low achieving children.

Three RMCTs were reluctant to attend in-service training because they had been teaching mainstream children for too long and were not interested in changing their ways. Family commitments were also cited as reasons for not wanting to attend in-service training. Seven RMCTs said they were willing to attend in-service training to learn new teaching skills. One RET expressed the likelihood of acceptance of further training by RMCTs:

“There are teachers who would be interested to attend such courses. All that is needed is to give them some information on what educating children with disabilities entails. For example when I opened this remedial class there were many RMCTs who came over to my class to see what remedial education is all about, and they asked a lot of questions about remedial education. That shows that RMCTs are interested in the education of children with learning problems.”

e. Special education school (HI)

Four SETs in the school had the perception that RMCTs would be reluctant to attend in-service training in special education. One of these SETs believed that unless RMCTs have family relations with HI, they would not be interested in the education of children with HI. RMCTs’ unwillingness according to these SETs is also due to family commitments. Three SETs who were unsure agreed that RMCTs might be willing to attend in-service training if the State Education Department directed them. RMCTs might also be interested in special education training if they were bored with the routine of teaching mainstream children and might want to try something completely different. Worthy of note is the comment from the SET who reminds us that teaching specialisation may be chosen for personal or family reasons:

“I volunteered to teach in this school because I have a son with HI. Hopefully by teaching in this school, I could help my son with his education...”

Table 76: RMCTs' willingness to attend in-service training			
Professional status	Willingness to attend in-service training		
	No	Undecided	Yes
1. RMCTs	20	3	20
RMCT willingness as perceived by			
2. Headteacher	1	1	1
3. SETs	13	10	1
4. RETs		6	
Total	34	20	22

8.4.3 Primary teacher perceptions of the conditions and strategies for encouraging RMCTs to accept IE

Primary teachers were asked to express their views on the two issues above. Teacher responses were classified generally into three broad categories based on assumed interpretative similarities during data analysis. Wherever appropriate, these categories were sub-divided further into sections. Table 77 shows the range of conditions for accepting IE as proposed by the 76 teachers interviewed; in the text their responses are expressed in percentage form.

Table 77 : Conditions for accepting IE as perceived by primary teachers	
Conditions	Total
1. Directed by the State Education Department	39
2. Children with SEN have certain abilities:	
a. have acquired the prerequisite skills	15
b. have no behavioural problems	22
c. would not accept children with SEN even without behavioural problems	6
3. For non-academic subjects only	7

8.4.3.1 RMCTs' conditions for accepting IE

Table 77 shows that for the first category of condition, teachers interviewed said RMCTs would accept the placement of children with SEN in their classes if they were directed to do so by the State Education Department (51.3%), but there were exceptions. The headteacher in mainstream school with SECs (LD) said that RMCTs involved in the school's placement programme had agreed to accept the selected children with LD without any directives from her or the State Education Department. This view was shared by the headteacher of a mainstream school with SECs (VI). The RMCTs in her school had also accepted the placement of children with moderate VI without directives. The headteacher in one ordinary mainstream school with a child whom the school regarded as having LD (see section 9.2) claimed that RMCTs involved in the teaching of this child readily accepted his presence in the classroom.

The second category of condition was that children with SEN placed in mainstream classes should have certain abilities. These children must have acquired certain prerequisite skills (19.7%), for example, the ability to manage themselves for children with LD, mastery of the use of Braille for children with VI, and fluency in the use of sign language for children with HI. Children with SEN must be able to behave themselves in mainstream classes (29.0%). This condition was put forward mainly by teachers from mainstream schools with SECs (LD) and ordinary mainstream schools. But there were also teachers who had the perception that RMCTs would not accept children with LD even if they did not have behavioural problems because of the poor academic abilities of children with LD (7.9%). The third condition made was that placement in mainstream classes should involve non-academic subjects only (9.2%).

8.4.3.2 Strategies to encourage RMCTs to accept children with SEN

The strategies listed in table 78 were recommended by primary teachers to encourage RMCTs to accept IE. These strategies were classified under six general categories.

Table 78: Strategies recommended to encourage acceptance of IE by RMCTs	
Strategies	Total

1. Personal incentives.	
a. Monetary rewards.	41
b. RMCTs' participation in the IE programme made part of teacher's yearly appraisal.	13
c. RMCTs sent for overseas trips to study teaching techniques and strategies of an IE class setting.	5
d. RMCTs involved in IE programme be given a chance to further their studies in special education at a higher level.	3
2. Provide all relevant support.	
a. Support from SETs.	37
b. Support from headteachers.	13
c. Support from other teachers.	4
3. Reduction of RMCTs' workload	
a. Reduce mainstream classroom population involved in IE programme.	51
b. The maximum number of children with SEN included in mainstream class restricted to three.	8
c. Include children with SEN in the class of low achieving children in mainstream schools that practise streaming.	7
d. Reduce RMCTs' teaching periods and non-teaching responsibilities.	14
e. Only one type of child with SEN included in a mainstream class.	1
4. Provide proof to RMCTs that IE does work.	11
5. All RMCTs in the school recognised as 'excellent' teachers should be involved in the IE programme.	3

Primary teachers interviewed suggested that RMCTs involved in the IE programme should be given incentives for their effort. There were generally four types of incentives recommended. The first was personal incentives, in particular financial reward (54.0%), and that RMCT involvement in IE should be made part of their yearly appraisal of teaching performance (17.1%). It was also recommended that RMCTs nominated for the IE programme should be sent for overseas placements in primary schools that have practised IE successfully (6.6%).

Another recommendation was that RMCTs involved in the IE programme should be given the chance to upgrade their academic qualifications (4.0%).

The second form of incentive mentioned was that mainstream schools with IE programme should be provided with all the appropriate teaching materials required, depending on the types of children with SEN included in mainstream classes (48.7%). These teachers argued this would save RMCTs time and effort in their everyday lesson preparation and ensure smoothness of practical classroom administration for children with SEN learning in mainstream classes.

The third type of incentive suggested was the availability of professional teaching support. Three forms were mentioned. The first was support from SETs (48.7%). Teachers argued that RMCTs needed to be given free access to consult and seek advice from SETs whenever they faced difficulties over the education of children with SEN included in their classes. This is especially so if IE is to be implemented without the retraining of RMCTs. Moral support by the headteacher was also mentioned by teachers interviewed (17.1%). Headteachers should make every effort to help RMCTs to iron out their difficulties resulting from IE. Teachers in ordinary mainstream schools and special education schools (HI) also felt it was essential that all teachers supported the IE programme (5.3%). Overall teacher support would ensure that RMCTs not involved in the programme would also do their bit to help children with SEN, especially when these children are outside their mainstream classes.

The fourth form of incentive recommended was the reduction of RMCTs' workloads. Teachers interviewed advocated that mainstream class responsibilities should be reduced (67.1%). This would give RMCTs more time to address the needs of SEN children in their classes, and also it would reduce other RMCT duties, for example, marking children's homework. In order to limit RMCTs' workloads, teachers suggested:

- (1) the number of children with SEN included be restricted to a maximum of three per mainstream class (10.5%),
- (2) children with LD should be placed in low achieving mainstream classes in those schools practising streaming (9.2%),

(3) the length of lessons and the number of lessons per day be reduced for RMCTs as well as the number of their non-teaching responsibilities. (18.4%),

(4) one teacher in an ordinary mainstream school suggested that only one type of child with SEN should be included per mainstream class (1.3%).

Besides incentives teachers interviewed said that RMCTs could be encouraged to try IE if the Ministry via the State Education Department could show examples of an IE programme that actually works (14.5%). They stressed that apart from knowing very little about IE in theory, the majority of RMCTs had never seen IE teaching in action.

Three teachers from mainstream schools with SECs (LD) and special education school (HI) also recommended that RMCTs who had been recognised by the Ministry as ‘excellent’ teachers be involved in IE programme (4.0%). As officially recognized excellent practitioners, they would be likely to possess the right credentials to make IE work.

8.5 General issues

8.5.1 Barriers towards the implementation of IE in mainstream schools

Primary teachers were asked to state the barriers that existed in mainstream primary schools which could hinder IE implementation. The barriers identified are listed in Table 79, and consist of nine general categories.

Table 79: Barriers towards IE implementation in mainstream schools	
Barriers	Total
1. Lack of information.	13
2. School systems.	
a. School two sessions system.	8
b. School streaming system.	6
3. RMCTs workloads	
a. High classroom population.	49
b. Responsibilities not related to teaching.	2
4. RMCTs not trained to teach children with SEN. (RMCTs can teach children with LD).	57 11
5. Examination pressure.	6
6. Acceptance of children with SEN:	
a. Headteachers' negative perception about the importance of education to children with SEN.	11
b. Unwillingness of RMCTs to accept children with SEN into their classes.	26
c. Negative acceptance of children with SEN by mainstream children.	7
d. Negative perception of children with SEN by parents of mainstream children.	10
e. Unwillingness of SETs to relinquish their teaching responsibilities	1
7. Resourcing.	
a. Lack of educational equipment and/or materials	30

b. Lack of classrooms.	20
c. Inadequate number or lack of SETs in the school.	23
8. Abilities of children with SEN.	
a. Children with LD behaviours.	5
b. Children with SEN low academic attainments.	12
9. Negative acceptance of IE by children with SEN.	4

Table 79 shows that there were nine categories of barrier. The highest percentage for specific barriers was RMCTs not being trained to teach children with SEN (75.0%). But several teachers in mainstream schools with SECs (LD) and ordinary mainstream schools considered RMCTs in their schools to be able to teach children with LD (14.5%). The second highest barrier cited was high classroom population (64.5%). Third was the lack of teaching resource materials (39.5%), and fourth was unwillingness of RMCTs to accept children with SEN in their classes (32.2%). Fifth was inadequate number of SETs available in mainstream schools with SECs, and the special education school (HI) also cited this shortage of SETs as a barrier.

Lack of classrooms (26.3%) was closely related to high classroom population, and the reason why many mainstream schools in the state of Melaka have to practice a two sessions school system. This two session system was also perceived as a barrier by teachers interviewed (10.5%). It was quoted as the main reason why one mainstream school with SECs (LD) had had to discontinue its placement programme, and why another such school was unable to try placement (see section 9.2). Lack of information on IE made RMCTs wary of its implementation (17.1%). RMCTs were also wary of IE because of the UPSR examination (7.8%).

Besides negative attitudes of RMCTs to IE, negative attitudes of the schools' headteachers (14.5%), mainstream children (9.2%), and mainstream children's parents (13.2%) were also cited as barriers to its implementation. Children with LD behaviour (6.6%) and their low academic abilities (15.8%) were perceived as barriers by teachers in mainstream schools with SECs (LD) and ordinary mainstream schools.

Other barriers cited by teachers interviewed were the unwillingness of SETs to relinquished their teacher responsibilities because of professional interest (1.3%), and unwillingness of children with SEN themselves to be included in mainstream classes (5.3%).

8.5.2 Changes suggested by primary teachers prior to IE implementation in mainstream schools

Teachers were asked to name changes they would like to see at the school level prior to IE implementation. Changes suggested were closely related to the barriers given in table 19. Changes suggested are listed in table 80 and grouped into five general categories.

Table 80: Changes suggested prior to IE implementation	
Changes	Total
1. Training in special education.	
a. RMCTs given in-service training in special education	54
b. Education of children with SEN and IE to be included in syllabus at teacher training colleges	7
	44
2. School communities should be supplied with in-depth and extensive information on the Ministry of Education IE plan.	
3. Resourcing	
a. Build more classrooms	15
b. Create the post of teaching assistant	17
4. School system.	
a. Have only one session of schooling per day instead of the present two sessions	7
b. Longer lesson periods for some subjects (e.g. 45 minutes instead of the present 30)	2
c. Establish or re-establish remedial education classes in mainstream school with SECs for children with LD	2
5. State Education Department:	1
a. Every District Education Office should have an officer in charge of special education.	2
b. Relevant authorities should carry out continuous monitoring.	1
c. Officer in charge of state SE provision should have special education background.	

The main change advocated by primary teachers interviewed was the retraining of SETs (71.1%). The JPN officer interviewed argued that if RMCTs have the confidence to teach children with SEN in mainstream classes, then the chances are that they will adapt well to IE. Retraining in special education would help them gain this confidence. There were two types of retraining programmes recommended by teachers: (1) The present one year in-service training in special education organized by the Ministry of Education Teachers' Training Division. (2) Teachers interviewed recommended that SETs involved in IE be given continuous training at district or state level. By establishing training centres at these levels, RMCTs could be called for training several times a month. This would address some of the issues regarding RMCTs' family commitments which were quoted by many teachers as reasons for their reluctance to attend retraining. Besides retraining, teachers also recommended that the education of children with SEN be made part of basic teacher training syllabuses (9.2%). This would prepare future RMCTs mentally to accept children with SEN in their classes.

Teachers also suggested school communities be informed about the Ministry of Education's intention to introduce IE in mainstream primary schools (57.9%). This would be more effective if the Ministry via the State Education Department were to allocate officers well versed in the programme and its implementation to disseminate IE information to all in the school community.

Mainstream school resources also needed to change in line with IE implementation. More classrooms needed to be built because IE will require the reduction of present class pupil numbers (19.7%). Building more classrooms would hopefully enable mainstream schools to practice one session schooling (9.2%). Teachers also suggested the creation of the post of teaching assistant in schools practising IE (22.4%). This would help to reduce RMCTs' workloads.

Besides suggesting a one session school system, two teachers in mainstream schools with SEC (LD) recommended that teaching periods for each individual subject should be increased

from the present 30 minutes to 45 minutes (2.6%). This would give RMCTs more time to concentrate on children with SEN learning difficulties. Again two teachers from these schools suggested that remedial education classes in mainstream schools with SEC (LD) be established or re-established (2.6%). These remedial classes could be used as transit points in the process of preparing children with LD for placement in mainstream classes, especially for academically oriented subjects.

Changes were also suggested by several teachers in the administrative structure of the state's education system. One teacher from a mainstream school with SECs (LD) suggested every District Education Office in the state should have one officer in charge of its special education programme (1.3%). This officer could act as 'trouble-shooter' for RMCTs with problems in their IE programme. Two teachers suggested the formation of a special committee at the state level to continuously monitor the IE programme in mainstream schools (2.6%). This committee would consist of experts in various educational fields and provide advice on IE implementation if required. One teacher from the special education school (HI) said the officer in charge of the state's special education programme should be someone with special education background. This would make him/her more understanding and committed.

8.6 Conclusion

The interview findings show that there are mainstream primary schools with SECs in the state of Melaka that have initiated the placement of children with SEN in mainstream classes. One school involved in this study tried part-time placement of several of their children with LD in mainstream classes but, owing to time-tabling problems, had to discontinue the process. Another mainstream primary school which has SECs for children with VI is still continuing (at the time of writing) with full-time placement of two children with moderate VI in mainstream classes.

The primary teachers interviewed generally admitted that they know very little about the IE innovation proposed by the Ministry of Education. This lack of knowledge about IE is due to lack of information about IE given to mainstream primary schools by the relevant education authorities. IE is rarely discussed within mainstream schools either formally or informally, and this is especially true in ordinary mainstream primary schools.

The majority of RMCTs interviewed said they had never been trained to teach children with SEN or to understand IE during their pre-service training. They also admitted that they never expected to be involved in any way at all in these children's education. There was no doubt that the RMCTs interviewed were anxious about IE. Generally, RMCTs felt they did not have the required skills to teach children with SEN if included in their classes. Thus they have the perception that teaching children with SEN requires different skills from the teaching of mainstream children.

The majority of primary teachers interviewed agreed that children with SEN have the right to IE because of equal education and socialisation opportunities but they also expressed their reservations about the benefit of IE for these children. They felt children with SEN who are intellectually able and can behave themselves in mainstream classes and can cope with the rigors of mainstream learning have the right to IE. But the same primary teachers are also of the opinion that only children with SEN who have been prepared for IE, and are ready socially and emotionally for mainstream learning, have the right to IE. They felt if these conditions are not fulfilled, children with SEN would not be able to benefit from mainstream

placement. They sincerely believe that IE will do more harm than good to these children's educational progress if mainstream placement is premature and unprepared.

Primary teachers also expressed the views that even though IE could be harmful to some children with SEN, it does have the potential to make mainstream children more 'caring'. IE would make mainstream children more aware of the difficulties that children with SEN encounter in everyday activities as the result of their impairments. This would shorten considerably the social distance between children with SEN and their mainstream peers. But they also felt this could only be achieved if RMCTs are active in promoting the 'caring' attitudes of mainstream children.

The primary teachers interviewed put forward the viewpoint that there are currently too many barriers present in mainstream primary schools to make IE implementation straightforward. They listed nine categories of barrier or obstacle (see Table 79) that need to be overcome if IE is to be given a chance to succeed in Malaysia. During the interviews the primary teachers also expressed their ideas on what actions the Ministry might take to encourage RMCTs to accept IE (see Tables 77 and 78). They also recommended changes to mainstream primary school structures, systems and practices prior to IE implementation.

Overall the main findings from both the quantitative and qualitative data and analyses point to complex interrelationships of a range of variables with regard to the specific context of primary schooling in Melaka. These findings need to be located within a broader discussion related to the national and international context and in particular to an appropriate workable model of change if IE is to become a practical reality in Malaysia. It is to such a discussion that I now turn in the following chapter.

This chapter discusses the findings of the study. A series of negative attitudes towards IE as revealed in the data is scrutinized and evaluated in the light of current primary practice. Malaysia has a strongly centralised system of education with firm control exercised by the Ministry of Education. Although the investigation was carried out in the state of Melaka, its findings could also be considered relevant for the nation's primary teachers as a whole because (1) mainstream primary schools in Malaysia have a uniform educational administration, system, structures and practices, and (2) all primary teachers are trained by the Ministry using the same curricula content.

The findings would indicate there are no two primary teachers in the same school who share exactly the same attitudes to IE. On the contrary there is a rich variety of beliefs and perceptions about IE.

It had to be assumed for the purpose of the study that the primary teachers who participated in this investigation were sincere in their responses to both the questionnaire and interviews. Constraints of time and resources did not permit any degree of subsequent re-examination of responses so as to check reliability of the instruments employed. However, given the opportunities made available to the respondents to express their views in confidential and anonymous conditions, it was judged that the teachers felt themselves to be at liberty to give opinions that could be contradictory to the Ministry's policies and practices. This anonymity gave them opportunities to put forward frank perceptions and honest opinions about IE which might not be expressed if Ministry officials were interviewing. I state this firmly because I am aware from my own professional standpoint that in the real Malaysian world of education the majority of teachers are apprehensive about expressing opinions detrimental to any national education policy for fear of being disadvantaged in one way or another.

There are diverse aspects of teachers' attitudes towards IE that could be discussed from the study's findings. For the purpose of this dissertation, however, the focus of discussion will address the following broad issues:

1. Primary teachers' understanding of IE.
2. Primary teachers' perceived rationale for the introduction of IE innovation.
3. RMCTs' general attitudes to IE.

The possible implications of these for the future success of the IE programme will be considered in the next chapter.

9.1 Primary teachers' understanding of IE

The study shows that primary teachers see IE as the placement of children with SEN in mainstream classes on a part-time or full-time basis. Encouraging examples of these practices were the two mainstream primary schools with SECs that had tried to implement their own versions of IE. One school had placed several of their children with LD part-time in mainstream classes, and the other had their two children with moderate VI placed full-time within mainstream classes. While these schools were evidently proud of their involvement in attempted forms of inclusion, they expressed little or no awareness of the sizeable population of children with special needs who at present have no opportunity even to be considered for such placement.

IE is also associated with the concept of 'readiness' of children with SEN for mainstream learning. In other words children with SEN need to be prepared for IE. 'Readiness' is one of the conditions cited by educationalists to encourage RMCTs to accept children with SEN. In this context, primary teachers in Malaysia are still ingrained with what Kunc (1992) described as the old paradigm of the practice of placing children with SEN in mainstream classes: **SEN children → improved skills → mainstream class.**

The process of preparing children with SEN for IE innovation may have to be accepted as necessary in Malaysia for practical purposes. The study's findings clearly show that RMCTs would be willing to accept children with SEN who (1) do not have any serious disruptive behaviours, and (2) have acquired the necessary skills of Braille in the case of children with VI, and sign language for children with HI. It is difficult to see the benefit to RMCTs from these children being proficient in Braille and sign language respectively if RMCTs themselves are not proficient in these skills. Children with LD must be able to manage themselves in the area of self-care because primary schools do not at present have teaching assistants to help RMCTs.

Preparing children with SEN prior to IE is feasible in Malaysia because of the two extra years option given to these children by the Ministry of Education to continue with their primary education. But this option, if taken, would have three serious implications: (1) Such children would have to be sent to mainstream schools which have SECs or to special education schools designed for this form of preparation. Only when the children are ready would they be fully placed in mainstream classes of the same schools or in mainstream schools of their own choice. (2) This process of preparation could condemn some of these children to permanent exclusion because they might never master the pre-requisite skills necessary for IE. (3) The children would initially have to be placed in mainstream classes of children younger than themselves rather than children of their own age because of the time lapse in preparing them. Intellectually normal children with VI and HI could first be placed in mainstream classes with children younger than themselves and be promoted gradually to higher classes if they made good educational progress. This might eventually enable them to be placed in mainstream classes of children of their own age. The overall findings would indicate that Malaysian primary teachers see the process of IE as 'assimilation' not 'accommodation' i.e. the child adapting to the learning environment, not the learning environment to the child. True, IE requires a restructuring of the existing educational process, but the overwhelming assumption of respondents in the study is to 'fit' children with SEN into the existing system with some provision made for their teaching and support.

Inclusion as proposed by its leading advocates does not require the preparation of children with SEN for mainstream learning, yet primary teachers want these children to be so prepared. Inclusion also requires the removal of all barriers that do not encourage its implementation by changing the internal organization of the schools, yet primary teachers talk about placing children with SEN within the present system. Let us consider why this should be so.

Historically, Malaysian primary teachers have been informed that only children with VI, HI, LD and autistic tendency are recognised by the Ministry of Education as having SEN. These children have always been referred to as special children by the educational fraternity, and are educated under the Ministry's provisions either in SECs or special schools. The Ministry does not even recognise that children with remedial needs have special requirements. Therefore it should not come as a surprise to anyone in Malaysia that primary teachers tend to associate IE with these four types of disability rather than with the full spectrum of educational disadvantage. This association is compounded by the Malaysian government's practice of dividing the education of children with disabilities between two of its Ministries. Since RMCTs see IE as the process of placing children with disability in mainstream classes, it is totally reasonable for them to want these children to be prepared with prerequisite skills before being placed in their classes.

The crucial issue that arises is what does the Ministry hope to achieve, 'integration' or 'inclusion'? If the Ministry wants to embrace the international practice of 'inclusion' it would have to redefine its present operational definition of SEN to include all children who are at a disadvantage in the mainstream school setting, i.e. in effect decategorizing children with disabilities, and this study's findings showed that there are in fact some forward looking primary teachers whose definition of SEN is children requiring different teaching and resources but not being necessarily disabled.

In practice Malaysia seems to be moving in the opposite direction from decategorization. Currently there is a move by the educational authorities in Melaka to include children with remedial needs into the Ministry's special education programme. This would increase rather

then decrease the categories of children with SEN, but in my judgement this move could be viewed positively. By agreeing to include children with remedial needs as part of its special education programme the Ministry is acknowledging that there are other children with learning problems besides the four types it recognises. This move should hopefully lead to efforts being made to eventually award special needs recognition to all children (1) who have significantly greater learning difficulties compared to their contemporaries, and (2) whose disability prevents them from making use of the educational facilities generally provided in mainstream schools. Acceptance by the Ministry of this recognition will move Malaysia a step closer to the international definition of children with SEN. It will also pave the way for 'gifted' (highly intellectually able) children to be part of the Ministry's special education programme, and these would eventually widen teachers' concepts of children with SEN to include any children who encounter any kind of learning problems in mainstream classes. Since SEN labeling is required for funding purposes, increasing the categories of SEN would ensure many more disadvantaged children were given the material resources needed to provide them with the educational help they require.

The main question then would be: would the Ministry be willing to restructure the primary schools so as to accommodate children with SEN in mainstream classes? And will the general public be willing to accept this restructuring? If IE is viewed merely as a method of answering the needs of children with learning difficulties only, in the Malaysian definition of the term, it is likely to be regarded as being too costly in that it would be of benefit only to a very small minority of the total school-age population. However, the introduction of IE might proceed in an easier and more welcome fashion if the school community as a whole were to perceive other sociocultural benefits developing for the entire ability range of their pupils.

At present the Ministry's approach to IE is vague and lacks operational definition. Since details of IE implementation are still to be announced, any attempts to place children with SEN in mainstream classes will be dependent on the individual school's interpretation of what IE entails. Hence the two different approaches used by the two mainstream primary schools in this study in implementing their IE programmes. Unless the Ministry comes up with a

clear description of how it wants its IE programme to be implemented, there will be different interpretations of IE by each individual primary school attempting to practise it.

9.2 Primary teachers' perceived rationale of IE innovation

Malaysian law does not require IE. Primary teachers conceptualise IE from two points of view: (1) social-ethical, and (2) psychological-educational. The social-ethical justification is that children with SEN have a right to IE in order to accord them the opportunities (i) to be equal to other school-going children so as to maximise their learning potential, (ii) to learn to accommodate to the society in which they live and (iii) to be able to attend their neighbourhood school. This justification also requires the alteration of the general public's attitudes to persons with disabilities in the creation of the 'caring' society as described in the 2020 Vision policy. Primary teachers who were of the opinion that IE would create a more 'caring' Malaysian society reasoned that the programme would familiarise mainstream children and children with SEN with each other due to regular interaction. These teachers felt that IE practice would make mainstream children more aware of the difficulties faced by children with SEN.

The psychological-educational justification given by primary teachers who support IE is that it would develop these children intellectually, socially and emotionally. Teachers were of the view that IE would benefit SEN children academically because they could learn from mainstream children.

Teachers were also of the view that placing children with SEN in mainstream classes would provide them with opportunities to learn appropriate social skills, thus enhancing their competencies for integration into mainstream society. The programme would move both children with SEN and mainstream children closer to each other, thus reducing their social distance.

Besides intellectual and social benefits, IE would offer children with SEN unlimited opportunities for their emotional development. Some teachers in the study believed that the ability to continuously interact with mainstream children in mainstream classes and consequently being accepted by these children would boost the confidence and self-esteem of children with SEN, and would develop their feeling of being part of the school's community.

The study shows that both the social-ethical and the psychological-educational justifications of IE peer-support by mainstream children to children with SEN were considered essential by teachers in citing the benefits of IE. Thus within the social-ethical and psychological-educational frameworks, primary teachers perceived the rationale in the same way as did Ainscow (1997), Carro, Gomez and Matia (1995a) and Yoshida (1986).

Even though primary teachers believed that IE could benefit the functional development of children with SEN and would make mainstream children more 'caring', RMCTs generally were unsure about the entitlement of children with SEN to IE. This seems to contradict their high positive perception of their understanding of the 'caring' society concept. Why then should RMCTs who consider themselves alert to the understanding of the 'caring' society concept have reservations about the right of children with SEN to IE?

Teachers argued that 'low-functioning' children with SEN would not be able to cope with the rigours of mainstream learning because mainstream schools prioritise children's academic achievement above all others. Mainstream teachers are geared towards achieving this particular objective, and IE could result in 'low-functioning' children with SEN being perpetually behind their more able peers in academic achievement. This, teachers argued, could cause children with SEN to be demoralised. Thus teachers believed it would be more 'caring' to place these children in mainstream classes for non-academic subjects or to educate them separately in SECs or special schools. Children with SEN, teachers said, should be given the opportunity of segregated educational provision because it could serve their educational needs better. Thus teachers who have reservations about the rights of children with SEN are not necessarily uncaring. They just felt that children with SEN would not be able to cope with mainstream learning in the present mainstream primary school conditions.

An important finding of this study that should provide hope for the future implementation of IE is that teachers are receptive to the idea of ‘high-functioning’ children with SEN being given the right to IE.

9.3 RMCTs’ attitudes to IE

The study shows that Malaysian primary teachers have a range of beliefs, opinions and hopes for IE policy irrespective of their professional status. The study indicates that there is every kind of attitude to IE imaginable amongst RMCTs. The interviews showed that RMCTs were, to their credit, genuinely concerned about the effect of IE both on children with SEN and mainstream children.

RMCTs have broadly negative general attitudes to IE. If this is a rather disappointing finding to the advocate of IE, it is nevertheless a position which administrative planners will have to take on board. From both the quantitative and qualitative analyses of findings reported here the teachers’ general stance can be discerned from the negative general cognitive and affective components to their attitudes as measured and from the slightly non-committal conative component to their attitudes. But RMCTs cannot be blamed for having negative attitudes to IE, since as I have already indicated IE is still very much a notional concept in Malaysia and has yet to be put into practice. RMCTs are not sure how the programme is to be implemented and in what capacity they would be involved in it. Besides, the majority of RMCTs have never been offered the kind of further training that would encourage them to become involved in the education of children with SEN even in those mainstream schools which already incorporate SECs.

There are nine reasons or barriers that have been identified that could have contributed to RMCTs having negative general attitudes to IE:

a. Lack of information

The paucity and uneven circulation of information about special education and IE was blamed by the teachers themselves for the lack of understanding in school communities. This lack of information was also cited by several primary teachers as the reason why RMCTs in general are unwilling to support IE and also why they are unwilling to attend in-service training in special education. A number of primary teachers felt RMCTs would be willing to support IE if they knew more about it. Concern about RMCTs' lack of knowledge was highlighted in this study when several teachers interviewed claimed that the only document that they had come across concerning IE was the Primary School Teachers' Attitudes (PSTA) questionnaire. One likely reason for this lack of information is that it was the Special Education Unit (UPK) that conceived the idea of IE. It was only in October 1995 that the Unit's status was upgraded to departmental level in the Ministry of Education. The new department is still trying to establish itself and this could be one reason why it is unable to give its full attention to IE implementation.

b. RMCTs not trained to teach children with SEN

RMCTs have a very negative perception about their own ability to teach children with SEN because they never expected to have to do so. SEN teaching had always been and still is the sole responsibility of special education teachers (SETs). Prior to 1995, special education and IE were not included in the Malaysian trainee teachers' curriculum. The idea of RMCTs being involved in the education of children with SEN was floated only when the Ministry of Education conceived the plan to introduce IE into mainstream primary schools. Therefore it is understandable that RMCTs are anxious about the programme, but it is also a conspicuous criticism of the teacher training curriculum itself within Malaysia that mainstream teachers have little appreciation of the scope of work to which they could profitably contribute.

c. IE would not benefit academic achievement of children with SEN

Primary teachers felt IE would benefit the social development of children with SEN the most, followed by their emotional development, but felt it would benefit their academic development the least, especially the children with LD. They reasoned that large mainstream classes would deprive children of the individual attention available to them in SECs which have relatively small class sizes compared to mainstream classes.

Generally, primary teachers are unsure about the suitability of the Kurikulum Baru Sekolah Rendah (KBSR) for children with SEN. They agreed that KBSR academic subjects are too difficult for children with LD because of these children's perceived low intellectual ability, which is also the reason why these children follow a different curriculum from mainstream children. Even SETs in the special education school for HI were convinced that KBSR academic subjects are too difficult for children with HI, yet these children are being taught the same KBSR as mainstream children. All categories of teacher in the survey regard the KBSR as being rigid and needing to follow the strict guidelines prescribed by the Ministry at every level of primary education. Disappointingly there was no evidence of a willingness on the part of RMCTs to reconceptualise or restructure the curriculum to meet a wider range of needs in their classes. However, a majority of teachers accepted the desirability in general of further training to answer the demands of IE when implemented, which again points to the need for much greater adaptability and insight among those responsible for the further training of qualified teachers.

d. School organization

The majority of mainstream primary schools, especially those in towns, practise two exclusive sessions each day. This is because of the inadequate number of classrooms. Usually primary 2 and 3 attend an afternoon session of schooling. SECs begin in the morning session. Due to the differences in school sessions, it will not be possible to place children with SEN in mainstream classes of primary 2 and 3. Inability to place these children in primary 2 and 3 was the reason why one mainstream school with SECs (LD) in the study had to discontinue its IE programme. It was also the reason why another mainstream school with SECs (LD) did not even try IE. For reasons such as this the standard practice of streaming children according to academic ability became a matter of concern to our teachers, especially in mainstream

schools with SECs (LD). The process of streaming aims, regrettably it may be thought, at an intellectual segregation of children. Teachers questioned the logic of placing children with SEN in mainstream classes when mainstream children themselves are being segregated. The widely held view (which is questionable) that streaming is beneficial claims that the intellectual ability of children with LD placed in the lowest streamed class (the least academic class) would not be too low compared to some mainstream children already in this class, and that would make class based teaching easier. This issue raises the obvious question of why there should be low ability children in mainstream classes whose difficulties appear to be as severe as those who have received the special attention that the designation of LD confers. One likely answer is that some low ability children of quiet temperament are prone to be lost sight of at the back of a class in their younger years. In other words they have not caused enough behavioural difficulty to be seen as requiring special attention, and this must be a matter of concern to any committed teacher.

e. The RMCTs' workload

The majority of RMCTs felt that IE would increase their teaching workloads immeasurably. At present, mainstream classes are already large. The placement of children with SEN without any reduction in class size would only add to teachers' burdens. They claimed they would have to prepare extra lesson plans for these children (even if only one of them were included in the class) as well as prepare lessons for the mainstream children. Here, the extra burden of detailed step by step programming is seen as a major barrier. It has to be acknowledged that in offering their comments the RMCTs as a group appear to have no 'holistic' understanding of the benefits that IE might have to offer, i.e. they fail to appreciate that an inclusive approach aims to offer new learning opportunities for an entire learning community, teachers as well as pupils. As it is, RMCTs appear to be preoccupied with a sense of the heavy burden of responsibilities which they feel will fall upon them, quite separately from their regular class teaching. The requirement for every child with SEN to have an individualised lesson plan prepared would be a major preoccupation and imposition, in the view of many RMCTs.

f. Examination pressure

All primary 6 children have to sit the Ujian Penilaian Sekolah Rendah (UPSR) examination. School children's performance in the UPSR is the basis for a mainstream school's annual evaluation, and the pressure to produce high percentages of UPSR passes may be seen by many to conflict with IE implementation. The UPSR results of children with LD would not in fact have any bearing on the evaluation of mainstream schools with SECs (LD) because these children's results are recorded quite separately from those of mainstream children. However this fact was not known to most RMCTs, as the majority of the RMCTs mistakenly said IE would adversely affect their school's evaluation. Maybe the headteachers in these schools felt it was not necessary to inform their RMCTs of this because during the time of the study no children with LD in schools involved in the interviews were UPSR candidates, nor were they likely to be in the near future.

However, the UPSR results of children with visual impairment (VI) and hearing impairment (HI) would affect mainstream school evaluations because their results are included in their schools' overall performances. Thus examination pressure would be more of a barrier to the placement of children with VI and HI than children with LD. While it is inconceivable that any state education system could dispense with its standardised assessments of scholastic achievements, especially in the process of classifying children for entry to secondary schooling, it needs to be recognised that the introduction of IE nationally would require new ways of evaluating developmental progress in terms of the social and emotional maturation of children with SEN. This may yet prove to be one of the hardest tasks for the personnel who aim to construct significant educational and social change within a cohesive and integrated learning community.

g. Negative acceptance of children with SEN by headteachers, mainstream children and parents of mainstream children

Headteachers' negative perceptions of the extra workload that would result from the obligation to provide children with SEN with the best educational facilities under IE are likely to constitute another barrier to its implementation. This is especially true if headteachers are primarily concerned with their school's performance in the UPSR examination. There are

two possible effects of these negative perceptions. (1) Headteachers would always prioritise the educational needs of mainstream children above those of children with SEN. (2) In the judgement of many teachers heads would try their best to get rid of children who they felt would not contribute to the school's UPSR performance, though this tactic is contradictory to the principles of IE.

The majority of teachers interviewed agreed that IE could feasibly make mainstream children more 'caring', but several of them felt that there is also a section of mainstream children who might be unwilling to accept children with SEN into their fold. Teachers are worried that this particular section of mainstream children could victimise children with SEN. Again this is rightly recognised as a concern, but there is no evidence to suppose that teachers would tackle this less effectively in an inclusive setting.

Teachers also expect the parents of mainstream pupils to express some objections to the placement of children with SEN. This is particularly the concern of teachers in mainstream schools with SECs (LD). Parental objection would make it difficult for the schools to give equal priority to the education of children with SEN because this child population is relatively small compared to the mainstream population of any school.

Although a number of mainstream teachers in the study predicted the likelihood of negative attitudes towards SEN pupils by some of their mainstream peers, and by some parents of their peers and, on a different level, by some of their own headteachers too, this gloomy picture is partly balanced by totally positive and optimistic opinions expressed by a number of SETs and those RMCTs who had the benefit of having experienced SEN placement in the past. Although it is generally recognised that forms of bullying are now increasingly identified in child learning communities as well as adult working communities, and at all levels of competence and responsibility, it is possible to take courage from the confidence of those few teachers who report instances of more able children showing genuine help and support to less able children. The involved classroom teacher has a significant role to play here: skilful teacher management can prompt intellectually competent children to take responsibility for the care of the less able, and intellectually weaker children when promoted to roles of

responsibility within the school setting can show levels of social initiative which parents and peers may not have predicted. These are all aspects of social acceptance and social acceptability which will merit exploration through forms of discussion, roleplay and behaviour rehearsal both in the classroom and in teacher training college.

h. Lack of resources

Unavailability or inadequate supply of appropriate educational equipment and/or learning materials in the schools would make the implementation of IE difficult. Ordinary mainstream schools are not normally expected to have any special equipment necessary for the education of children with VI and HI, but they might have some commercially produced teaching materials which could be adapted for use with children with LD. Furthermore even mainstream schools with SECs encounter problems in trying to provide essential equipment for their children with SEN.

Inadequate numbers of SETs or the unavailability of SETs in mainstream schools is perceived as another major and perhaps even greater problem facing IE. The majority of RMCTs are not trained in special education, and a majority of the teachers interviewed were quick to recognise that RMCTs involved in any IE programme would need frequent opportunity to consult SETs on how to make the KBSR accessible to children with SEN. If the advisory services of SETs are not made readily available to RMCTs, this study shows that the latter are likely to reject IE at the outset.

i Negative acceptance of IE by children with SEN

Where the focus of schooling is on academic success rather than social inclusion, which is held to underpin the very concept of a 'caring' society, less able children may feel excluded and be seen as a 'problem'. And worse, they may begin to feel they are the problem. Several SETs were able to quote instances of children who receive special help showing a distinct reluctance to be 'promoted' into a mainstream class, feeling much more at ease with the relative intimacy and protection of the SEC setting. Restructuring the process of education so as to foster both the 'caring' society on the one hand and the healthy competition which

academic excellence evokes on the other would provide the ultimate challenge for change as Malaysia seeks to achieve its 2020 vision.

In summary concerning the main negative attitudes listed above, it is essential to recognise them as the barriers which would have to be systematically addressed by the Ministry to minimise their negative effects on IE innovation. A host of difficult questions have to be answered: What are the strategies needed to minimise negative effects? How much funding and commitment is the Ministry willing to allocate to a programme which in reality would benefit a relatively limited number of children? Would the Ministry be willing to sacrifice other areas of its educational programmes in order to boost its IE innovation? Is there the political will in the government to push through its policy to this extent? And in a more positive light, what changes is the Ministry disposed to introduce so as to establish widespread acceptance of inclusion within the adult and child community as a whole? It would be easy to feel overwhelmed by the immensity of the task that faces the teaching force, but it may well be from within the present resources of the teaching force that the Ministry may begin to seek some of its answers. Although the established ethos of Malaysia's educational system has tended to be one of control from above, there is promise and virtue in seeking to promote a professional culture in which individual schools working alongside the local 'consumers' of their services are encouraged to set up their own working groups to formulate their own preferences and policies for change. Ideas and recommendations for finding new solutions to old problems can move upwards as well as downwards, and it would be my belief that a concerted involvement of the teachers who are already involved at the SET level could yield a range of feasible suggestions by which established and successful initiatives in forms of integrated practice may be reviewed and adapted and disseminated on a road which hopefully leads towards the concept of full inclusion.

9.4 Variables influencing RMCTs' general attitudes to IE

Non-Malaysian studies show that teacher attitudes to the inclusion of children with SEN are influenced by child-related, teacher-related, and educational-environment related variables.

Relevant studies by Forlin (1995); Ward, Center and Bochner, (1994); and Clough and Lindsay (1994) have already been referred to in this dissertation. They show that generally teachers exhibit more positive attitudes to the inclusion of children with sensory impairments than to those with intellectual disability. But Malaysian RMCTs generally have a very negative perception of the suitability of children with both sensory and intellectual disability for IE. Statistically, there are no significant differences in the general attitudes of RMCTs towards the various types of children with learning difficulties that they have encountered in their varied teaching placements. The interviews provided reasons for this finding.

RMCTs tend to believe that children with LD, owing to their cognitive impairment, would not gain much scholastically in mainstream classes. They also feel that these children's behavioural problems might produce difficulties for classroom control and that they could be a distraction to other children's learning. The RMCTs conceded that some children with VI and HI had intellectual capabilities equal to those of their mainstream peers; but their own inability to communicate with children with VI in writing, due to their lack of skills in Braille, and with children with HI verbally, due to their lack of skills in sign language, make them feel less than competent to assume teaching responsibility for youngsters presenting such a range of learning problems.

Six teacher-related variables of (1) gender, (2) grade level taught, (3) number of years teaching, (4) types of qualification of SETs, (5) types of children with SEN in contact with professionally, (6) mainstream schools with SECs which have had tried IE, these have all been examined. It appears that none of these variables exerts any significant influence on the general attitudes of RMCTs to IE. It is heartening to note that RMCTs with direct professional contact with children with SEN do have significantly fewer negative attitudes to IE compared to those without such contact. This particular finding is consistent with the

results of studies done by LeRoy and Simpson (1996); Janney et al (1995); and Leyser, Kapperman and Keller (1994), all of which showed that teachers' actual experience with children with SEN has affected their attitudes favourably. As a result of being in regular social contact with children with SEN in their everyday teaching, RMCTs would appear to be more sensitive to these children's educational needs.

The professional status of primary teachers was also found to be a factor in influencing attitudes to inclusion. This study shows that both SETs and RETs have significantly more favourable perceptions of IE compared to RMCTs. These findings are consistent with the studies of Forlin (1995); Ward, Center and Bochner, (1994); and Schmelkin (1981) all of which showed that teachers' professional status does influence their attitudes about inclusion. A possible explanation for this is that training in special education either officially (RETs and SETs) or informally, by consultation and discussion with colleagues (SETs), has favourably influenced the affective component of attitudes of SETs and RETs to favour IE.

The educational-environment related variable of resource support has been shown by several studies (e.g. Janney et al, 1995; LeRoy and Simpson, 1996; and Clough and Lindsay, 1994) to be an important factor in generating positive attitudes to inclusion. The findings of this study also reflect this. This study has shown that RMCTs might be willing to consider IE if: (1) specialist support is provided to assist them in IE innovation, (2) headteachers are supportive of the programme, and (3) appropriate educational materials are provided by the relevant education authorities.

The study also shows that there is a statistically positive relationship between the three components of attitudes of RMCTs to IE. Since IE has yet to be implemented, it is reasonable to assume that in the Malaysian educational context it is the cognitive and affective components of attitudes that are currently influencing the conative component to IE.

The next chapter will expand the discussion from my knowledge and experience of Malaysia to make some relevant observations on the IE debate and to draw some logical conclusions that are consistent with but not all directly dependent on the findings of this study.

This chapter draws on the questionnaire and interview material already presented in such a way as to offer hopefully relevant recommendations to the Ministry of Education in the light of their delay in proclaiming and publicising their proposals for the establishment of inclusive education in 2010. It needs to be stated that many primary teachers, both mainstream and special, are currently aware of being held in suspense about the proposed IE project, and at present it is a moot point whether the Ministry will come down on the side of a modification of integration rather than a convincing plan for the kind of inclusion which a range of countries are advancing towards internationally.

10.1 Changes to support IE in mainstream primary schools

Malaysia is proceeding towards the introduction of Inclusive Education in mainstream schools. During the period of completing this study, the Ministry of Education has yet to inform the school communities about its plans to put inclusion into operation. Whatever the Ministry has planned, it needs to consider that RMCTs are both reticent and wary about the programme, and they could not reasonably be faulted for having this negative attitude. They need to be convinced that all children with SEN under the Ministry's special education programme deserve a chance to participate in mainstream learning for social-ethical and psychological-educational reasons. They need informed advice and guidance to enable them to see the very probable societal benefits that can follow inclusive development. RMCTs cannot simply be expected to accept the programme without any changes made in the present mainstream primary school settings or as regards their teaching status. There is no doubt that mainstream teachers would expect additional input in the form of increased resources for classroom facilities and extra supports, especially of teaching assistants.

The suggestions made by primary teachers in this investigation should be able to help personnel involved in IE implementation to undertake some necessary changes to ensure that IE gets off on the right track during the initial stages of its development. This will not be easy. Clough and Lindsay (1991:5) reminded us that:

“....change itself does not happen simply, immediately, and unilaterally, but is a much more awkward, less predictable, and often painful affair.”

It must be conceded that there is no ideal scenario. The real world of primary education in Malaysia is complicated and there are constraints that cannot be ignored. That should not stop the Ministry from trying to refine present educational provision in such a way that mainstream classes could be able to cater for a whole range of children, thus preventing the exclusion of the individual disadvantaged child from mainstream learning.

a. Vision

The first requirement of change is vision, so as to avoid confusion. Part of this vision is to: (1) understand the differences between the practices of ‘integration’ and ‘inclusion’, and (2) initiate the concept and practice of IE in Malaysia.

This vision has already been partly fulfilled. The vision to develop a ‘caring’ Malaysian society has resulted in the Ministry of Education’s plan to implement IE. It has also resulted in the upgrading of the Special Education Unit (UPK) to departmental status. But this study shows that the Ministry’s top down vision of IE has not been widely shared with the personnel who should be most involved in its implementation process, the school teachers. In other words, there is no shared vision between the top ministerial administrators and the primary teachers. Therefore it is essential that the Ministry’s rationale, aims, and objectives of IE are made known to RMCTs. This understanding would greatly help in the development of the RMCTs’ own vision of IE, for the Ministry would be rash to seek to impose its vision on unreceptive RMCTs. The study findings clearly show that RMCTs would comply with the Ministry’s directives to accept IE, but, as argued by Fullan (1993), this would not guarantee commitment from them to make IE work. Imposition of vision might make RMCTs

rebellious towards the programme, especially as the study indicates that they have generally negative attitudes to IE policy. RMCTs must be allowed to form their own vision (within the broader vision of the Ministry) and the Ministry needs to support this change of outlook. Therefore the Ministry via the State Education Department needs to ensure that every primary school receives as much information about IE as possible, either through official documentation or by sending the relevant education officers to explain the programme to teachers. If disseminating information is done through documentation, then special notes need to be attached to the documents requesting that headteachers ensure that all teachers in the schools receive the information, especially schools with SECs. This is because headteachers usually distribute information received concerning children with SEN to SETs only.

In order to establish a 'caring' society, besides teachers, information about IE should also reach other school communities, i.e. mainstream pupils and non-teaching personnel. Parents of both mainstream children and children with SEN need to understand about the programme and if possible be invited to meetings and talks about it. This is because several primary teachers during the interviews indicated that parents of mainstream children might well oppose IE innovation. Shared vision of IE by entire school communities would ensure collective involvement of all parties associated with the school in the programme directly or indirectly. This would give IE the best start it needs during its initial implementation.

b. Teaching skills

The second requirement for change is for RMCTs to be equipped with the relevant teaching skills through pre-service or in-service training in special education. Studies for example by Janney et al, (1995); Leyser, Kapperman, and Keller, (1994); Beh-Pajooh (1992); and Shimman, (1990) show that training in special education is significant in making teachers supportive of inclusion. Without training RMCTs would experience fears and anxieties about IE. RMCTs in this investigation insisted that children with SEN come to mainstream classes after mastering certain prerequisite skills. If a criterion for IE is readiness, then there will probably be children with SEN who will never be part of mainstream learning, i.e. they may be given opportunities for integration, but will never be included. Therefore, it might be

necessary to place these children in mainstream classes, maybe after two years of initially being educated in SECs or special education schools, whether they are ready or not. RMCTs will simply have to work with these children in their classes. If this action is preferred, as advocated by Thomas and Webb (1997), RMCTs will need to be convinced that IE is all about good teaching and that they have the skills to teach any child with SEN placed in their classes irrespective of the nature and range of learning disabilities. RMCTs should view IE not as being specialised teaching for children with SEN and 'normal' teaching for mainstream children. Both can co-exist inside the same school and classroom. The question is how can RMCTs be convinced of this? One solution could be in-service training in special education for RMCTs.

In-service training should also train RMCTs with the skills of adapting the KBSR to the types of children with SEN placed in their classes. RMCTs have the perceptions that KBSR is very rigid. Thus they need to be trained how to modify the KBSR in line with their teaching process in order to support children with SEN. They also need to learn how to develop and adapt existing school base resources for their teaching needs. The study clearly shows that RMCTs are lacking in these skills. This results in their wrongly believing that they are incompetent to teach these children.

Since in this study we find there is a positive relationship between the three components of attitudes towards IE, the Ministry may wish to consider adapting the training of future primary teachers in order to give every teacher some awareness and knowledge of special education and IE. More modules about IE need to be incorporated in the pre-service training curriculum. This move would increase trainee teachers' knowledge IE, and therefore would likely alter the cognitive element of their attitudes to IE. These trainees should also be given practical direct experience of children with SEN in order to challenge the affective component of their attitudes. The study shows that this may be achieved. This might favourably influence the conative component of trainee teacher attitudes, hopefully resulting in positive general attitudes in the trainee towards IE. In order to incorporate more modules on IE in primary method curricula, some part of the present curriculum will need to be removed.

Since all elements of the present curriculum are considered to be important, which elements should be removed? And, if removed, will this have a negative effect on subject matter?

Besides specific skills, as suggested by Fullan (1993), RMCTs should also be given inquiry and collaboration skills. RMCTs are bound to face many problems during the initial stage of IE implementation. Their inquiring skills, i.e. their ability to solve problems encountered and to experiment with different styles of teaching children with SEN, are essential for the success of IE. RMCTs' collaboration skills would enable them to work with as well as learn from other RMCTs about teaching children with SEN. It would also enable them to work with SETs and other personnel in their everyday dealings with these children. Thus in-service training of RMCTs during IE implementation should be more than just one-off workshops and disconnected training. It should be a continuous process, particularly a process which raises critical issues related to inclusion rather than integration per se.

c. Incentives

The third requirement for change is incentives. Without incentives RMCTs would be resistant to IE innovation because it would be a totally new and unfamiliar educational strategy in Malaysian primary education. There are two ways RMCTs could be made to accept the programme. (1) By making it compulsory for them to accept IE, but this could make RMCTs feel frustrated and/or angry, and this could do more harm than good to the programme. (2) By giving RMCTs incentives.

Incentives in the form of personal gains (e.g. financial reward, scholarships, etc) and reduction of workloads, as suggested by primary teachers, are difficult to fulfil because of restricted funding for schools. Therefore the most appropriate incentives to encourage RMCTs should relate to their professional status as teachers. What has emerged from this study is that there is no ideal model of IE practice in Malaysia, and one of the requests of primary teachers in the study is for the Ministry to show RMCTs how IE actually works. RMCTs have no real understanding of the practicality and the educational success of having children with SEN in mainstream classes. So the Ministry needs to develop pilot studies of IE within the Malaysian education system. The study has identified two mainstream schools that

had already tried IE. It will be to the benefit of all concerned to study the experiences of these two schools. The strengths and weaknesses of their programmes should be looked at carefully. An important consideration that needs to be taken into account is that these schools tried IE on their own initiative without any support from the State Education Department. They are local examples of natural, spontaneous IE in action.

Information about these two schools' good practice should be disseminated widely so that RMCTs have a clear understanding of what successful IE is all about. If this could be followed by a reduction of workloads, by encouragement from headteachers and peers, and by other material and human support, then RMCTs, as confirmed by the study's finding, would be ready and willing to support IE. An even bigger incentive would be monetary gain. Thus the most affordable personal incentive that could be given to RMCTs within the Ministry's limitations is to make RMCTs' participation in IE programme a substantial part of their yearly teaching appraisal, since their annual pay increment depends on this.

d. Resourcing

The fourth requirement of change is the area of resources. Resource support is essential to avoid RMCTs becoming frustrated with the IE programme. Studies by LeRoy and Simpson, (1996); Janney et al, (1995); Clough and Lindsay (1991) show that teachers tend to exhibit positive attitudes to inclusion if they are given appropriate resource support. And the present study confirms this. RMCTs requested that they be given all the resource support necessary if they are required to practice IE. There are two types of resource support needed for IE practice, mentioned by primary teachers: (1) Learning materials and physical facilities support, and (2) human resource support. All mainstream schools involved in the programme should be supported with appropriate teaching materials and facilities. At the same time these schools should be encouraged with the help of specialists to produce their own teaching materials.

RMCTs also require support from SETs, ancillary professionals (e.g. educational psychologist and speech therapist, etc). The study shows that the problem with these support services is that the State of Melaka has insufficient numbers of officially trained SETs. This could also

be true for the other states in the country. To counter the shortage of SETs, the State Education Department would have to reconsider the role of SETs in mainstream schools with SECs. Current practice is to place SETs in a mainstream school permanently. It may be necessary to classify all trained SETs as 'itinerant' or peripatetic teachers but based in their present schools. Being itinerant teachers, SETs would be accessible to other schools that require their services. This requires a review of the systemic notion of support.

e. Action plan

The fifth requirement for change is an action plan. An action plan is necessary in order to support RMCTs in defining clearly realisable objectives and targets and in producing the means of evaluating programmes as well as assessing need. An action plan involves planning strategies for the eventual introduction of IE downward from the ministerial level to state, to district, and to school level. Implementation strategies, acquiring and distributing resources to participating mainstream schools, training of RMCTs, and methods of monitoring programme progress, all need to be planned carefully.

Implementation strategies would also involve the identification of mainstream primary schools that would participate in the first stage of the programme introduction. It would be impractical to involve every mainstream primary school immediately because it would cause massive administrative and financial problems. Therefore it is suggested that the first stage of IE should involve only (i) mainstream schools with SECs, and (ii) ordinary mainstream schools that are immediate neighbours to special education schools. This study has shown that RMCTs in these schools have more favourable attitudes to IE than have their counterparts in ordinary primary schools. RMCTs in ordinary primary schools need to be given personal experience in the education of children with SEN prior to IE implementation in their schools. Non-contact with children with SEN at the professional level sustains ignorance of these children's educational needs, and this ignorance will be damaging to IE innovation in ordinary primary schools. The question is how is this experience provided, if the schools do not have SECs?

The Ministry should consider the ‘whole school’ approach to IE. Everyone associated with the school will play a part in the IE programme. The RMCTs involved in IE should be supported by all the school’s available personnel in respect of their acceptance of children with SEN.

Maybe initially, the Ministry could involve RMCTs who are at least willing to try IE or are committed to make IE work. This option could be considered because of the experience of the two primary schools in this study that had tried IE. Their RMCTs involved IE were persuaded and not directed by their headteachers to accept children with SEN. Adopting this option would raise the issue of fairness among RMCTs. Is it fair not to involve RMCTs in the IE programme just because they are disinterested or hostile to it? This study suggests that many RMCTs will accept IE if directed by the Ministry. If the Malaysian Ministry wants to push the IE policy by asserting its power it may well fail, and may harm IE rather than enhance it. The Ministry needs to be sensitive to the individuality of mainstream schools and their RMCTs in deciding how to initiate IE.

It is also recommended that the gradualist approach be adopted for the first stage of IE implementation. IE should be part-time and involve non-academic subjects only. Including children with SEN for academic subjects should be done gradually. It should be done only when the school’s experience of IE increases and when RMCTs, after having attended appropriate in-service training in special education, have confidence in their ability to teach these academic subjects to children with SEN.

Given the present state of the Malaysian education system, ‘integration’ is more suitable than ‘inclusion’ because the restructuring necessary for inclusion would, in the short term, create too many problems within the primary sector. It is also difficult to envisage the Ministry of Education revamping the internal organisation of the present primary school just to accommodate the inclusion of children with SEN. Integration would require gradual modification of the present school system, thus paving the way for a much more inclusive setting of mainstream classes.

10.2 Implication for change

In a society that is trying to create a 'caring' outlook, the school system would have to look beyond a simple understanding of resources and incentives for change. There is a need to reconstruct vision, and to think about inclusive schools as requiring different approaches in presenting the school curriculum. There is also a need to rethink the process of educating children together in a mainstream class. This diversity should not be limited to those with disabilities, but should apply to children whose differences can be described in ethnic, religious, and social-cultural terms. The process of bringing these children together within the existing mainstream school settings requires fundamental review of existing systems, methods of resourcing, process of teaching, and ultimately change in attitudes. Whether or not this could be achieved depends heavily on the will of those responsible for its implementation.

It cannot be denied that implementing an inclusive programme in Malaysia could well put almost unbearable pressures on the teaching force, especially at an early stage of innovation, owing to the very necessary restructuring of the educational environment. But inclusion is about much more than mere restructuring; nor are incentives for teachers the only obstacle to be tackled. Much more significant is the need to appreciate and address the many cultural prejudices, anxieties and tensions that can paralyse the will to find new ways to solve old problems. The objection will always be made that there are some children with significant disabilities who will not 'fit' a particular school environment. Yet it can be seen from this study that there does exist within Malaysia a core of well trained and experienced special education teachers who are equipped both intellectually and, more importantly, emotionally to face the challenge of responding to critical thinking in this area of profound educational change. Moreover they would appear to be ready and willing to participate in the exercise of developing an educational society in which students of all abilities may profitably share some of their learning experiences. This carries major implications for much needed expansion in the field of teacher training, if we are to promote Malaysian practices that are truly inclusive.

10.3 Dissemination

In contemplating fresh training input to the Malaysian primary teaching force, I am encouraged by the viewpoint of Sykes et al (1997) who hold that if an organized teaching body can display a high level of professional identity and activity and membership commitment, this enables governments to collaborate with them in a variety of new ways so as to expand the approaches to inclusive education. This could be of major value for Malaysia.

It is my hope and intention to be in a position to disseminate the findings of this study primarily to the Ministry of Education in Malaysia. Beyond that the Malaysian Department of Special Education may wish to facilitate the opening of doors to the establishment of seminars, workshops and discussion groups for a range of schools and teachers, both special and mainstream.

I would also hope that the special educational journals would be interested to receive my reports, for publication both in English and Bahasa Malaysia.

This final chapter reviews a number of acknowledged limitations of method to which this study was prone and it proceeds to a conclusion of its findings to be offered to the Malaysian Ministry. There is also offered a range of suggestions that other investigators could profitably explore so as to further the establishment of inclusive education in Malaysian primary schools.

11.1 Limitations of the study

The aim of this study is to answer some key questions concerning IE implementation in Malaysian mainstream primary schools. The focus of the investigation was to seek answers to three broad questions: (1) What concept of IE do primary teachers have? (2) What are their attitudes to IE implementation? and (3) What are their suggestions on changes prior to IE implementation?

One limitation was the range of respondents available for the study. This was not a national study of primary school provision. Of necessity, owing to limitations of funding, it was restricted to the single state of Melaka. Nor could every primary teacher in Melaka state be given the opportunity to participate. Only teachers from four District Education Offices were represented. But because of the general uniformity of the Malaysian primary education system and of the training of its primary teachers nationally, it is reasonable to generalise the study's findings to the national primary teacher population as a whole.

With hindsight, maybe it may have been more appropriate for the PSTA attitude scale to have been developed from the data collected through interviewing. An interview schedule which was less rigid in comparison with the semi-structured interview schedule actually developed

may have allowed primary teachers to express their opinions about IE policy more freely. Themes derived from the interviews could have been used to select hypothesized domains for the construction of the PSTA attitude scale. This may have ensured a higher validity of the PSTA in measuring attitudes to IE in Malaysia.

The third limitation relates to the techniques used for data collection. Denzin and Lincoln (1994) recommend that researchers use a 'bricolage' method (a bringing together of diverse practical elements) in their investigations, and because of the evident complexity of IE, the Denzin and Lincoln recommendation was accepted. The study purposely adopted a methodological process with the aim to illuminate. The mixed model of quantitative and qualitative approaches to understanding attitudes to IE was chosen to provide a richer and more illuminating paradigm to understanding the issues under examination. The survey method using questionnaire and interviews was the only data gathering techniques used. Other methods, for example an in-depth case study, could perhaps have yielded a deeper understanding of primary teacher attitudes to IE and maybe should have been considered.

Besides the limitation of the research design, there are also the limitations of the research questions being investigated. The broad issue of this study was IE. The specific issue was primary teacher attitudes to IE policy for children with SEN under the Ministry of Education's special education programme. While teacher attitudes are important, there are other broad issues about IE that are important too. In a sense the study was only marginally concerned with the morality and ideology of IE, and was more concerned with the implementation of an IE policy that has yet to be decided by the Ministry. From the point of view of implementation, the study's main concern was some managerial aspects of IE, i.e. the management of the staffing of the programme. There are other issues that could have been investigated too, for example: (1) the managing of physical and education material resources, (2) parental involvement in IE programme, and (3) mainstream peers' acceptance of children with SEN. The study also deliberately excluded children with SEN under the Ministry of National Unity and Social Development.

11.2 Final Conclusions

What has emerged from this study essentially is that primary teachers in Malaysia appear to see the process of IE from the point of view of the existing educational system, i.e. without envisaging any fundamental change to present school organization. Teachers relate IE to the merely practical process of moving children with SEN into mainstream classes. For this, they would expect a whole range of factors to be addressed (e.g. INSET, both materials and human resources, the readiness of children with SEN, and the intellectual ability of children with SEN) before they could accept the moving process. However it can be argued that this concept of IE has been prematurely formed in conditions of uncertainty since at the time of writing the Ministry of Education's operational definition of IE has not been formulated publicly and the practices of IE that would have to be adopted have yet to be announced.

The key issue that arises is what does the Ministry hope to achieve in the year 2010, 'inclusion' or 'integration'? If the Ministry wishes to create a 'caring' society as ambitiously envisaged in the national Vision 2020 policy, then it has to view IE as being more than integration as currently understood by the present teaching force. The Ministry is faced with two main choices:

(1) If in the early stages of placing children with disabilities in mainstream classes, the Ministry elects to go the gradualist route, then integration will be the way forward. As a first step this would be a positive gain, and within Malaysia would be considered as a major leap forward. For the long term process, integration would need to proceed with the restructuring of (i) the present internal organization of mainstream primary schools, (ii) the KBSR curriculum, and (iii) the teaching process, so as to support a greatly widened form of integration.

(2) The second choice is to be more radical and to implement inclusion in the sense advocated by its proponents internationally. This would involve placing all children with disabilities in mainstream classes across the country at one and the same time, and trying to solve the inevitable problems when they arise as best the Ministry could, via the State Education Department and District Education Offices. This would have profound implications for teachers and teaching in Malaysia. This implementation would require (i)

new methods of training teachers, (ii) seeking and encouraging school-based resource development, (iii) a different style of managing schools by headteachers, and (iv) the restructuring and rethinking of the KBSR curriculum. In other words, a fundamental reshaping of the way that mainstream primary schools currently operate would be required. Whether or not this can be realised will depend very much on the determination of the Ministry of Education to see the programme succeed.

Again and again this study has needed to draw attention to the central issue about the nature of 'inclusion' as opposed to 'integration'. Internationally, the movement is currently towards inclusion, however difficult that may be, but the question is whether or not in some developing countries such as Malaysia IE should really be integration. It is right to ask: should any country not be given the freedom to operationalise its own definition of IE so as to meet its own needs within its own historical context? Or should Malaysia now stop talking about IE and start officially referring to its policy as 'integration'? Or should it continue with its usage of the term IE, and if so, should it adapt it and accept some degree of modification of goal in order to be more like the development in countries that already practice partial forms of inclusion?

This study has shown above all that regular mainstream class teachers have generally negative attitudes to inclusive education. Yet there is an established awareness, from time-served headteachers down to recently qualified assistant staff, that regular mainstream class teachers are central to the fortunes of any future IE programme, so the attitudes of key personnel must be positively addressed as a top priority. It is not fair to criticize mainstream teachers for currently having this negative attitude, which results from their being only too well aware of the many barriers and uncertainties discussed in detail within this report. They have not been given appropriate detailed information about IE by those responsible for disseminating such information at the Ministry level. Nor have they ever had direct experience in the teaching of children with special educational needs (except in a few mainstream schools with special remedial classes). Lack of experience on the part of regular mainstream teachers has created appreciable fears about the impending implementation of IE owing to an apparent lack of

planning for fundamental changes in the educational management of mainstream primary schools.

On the positive side it is seen that many of the special education and some of the mainstream teachers in the survey display a clear understanding of the key issues of the IE debate as they have progressed over the last two decades: how originally the main issue in the debate was primarily one of school structures, of where within the school setting children with disabilities were to receive their education; this to some extent has been superseded by the consideration over the issue of time, of whether children with educational needs should spend only a small part, or a sizeable part, or of all their time in a general education classroom. Some of the teachers showed an appreciation that Malaysia's educational structure in any case caters only for a proportion of all children who could conceivably be deemed as having special educational needs. Many children with physical disabilities and emotional and behavioural problems who in other countries might qualify for forms of segregated placement are in practice catered for in mainstream settings in Malaysia, which underlines the existence of a level of inclusion by default which is not fully appreciated. What was not perhaps voiced in the survey of teachers' comments and opinions was an awareness of the extent to which inclusion would require a degree of assessment and self-reassessment of teachers themselves, of how they in practice understand the pupil's role in learning, and of the working relationships among teachers themselves in their work with their pupils. Nor was there explicit mention that inclusion would require teachers to re-evaluate the processes for assessing children's learning and for communicating such knowledge to the children themselves and to parents and to administrators.

One is left asking the constant question: how best is change to come about? Although the established ethos of Malaysia's educational system has tended to be one of control from above, there is promise and virtue in seeking to promote a professional culture in which individual schools working alongside the local 'consumers' of their services are encouraged to set up their own working groups to formulate their own preferences and policies for change. Ideas and recommendations for finding new solutions to old problems can move upwards as well as downwards, and it would be my belief that a concerted involvement of the

teachers who are already qualified and operating in special educational provision could yield a range of feasible and informed proposals by which established and successful initiatives in forms of integrated practice may be reviewed, adapted and disseminated on a road which hopefully leads towards the concept of full inclusion.

Above all it needs to be borne in mind that this study has yielded clear evidence that many of Malaysia's regular mainstream teachers are willing in principle to consider the advance of inclusive education if changes to the management of their schools are forthcoming. And in this respect Malaysia is not alone.

11.3 Future studies

There has never before been any research done on IE in Malaysia. This study of primary school teacher attitudes to IE is therefore only the beginning, and is only a very small part of the broad issues of IE in Malaysia. More studies are required to gain a deeper understanding of the complex issues of educating children with SEN. It is with this in mind that the following investigations are recommended to those who are interested in enriching knowledge about special education in Malaysia:

1. Study of national type mainstream primary school teachers' attitudes to IE.
2. Study of mainstream children's acceptance of children with SEN.
3. Study of the perceptions of parents of mainstream children and of parents of children with SEN regarding IE and their possible involvement.
4. Study of types of teaching skills RMCTs feel they should be given in order to teach children with SEN placed in their classes.
5. Study of the practice of IE.
6. Study of secondary teachers' attitudes to IE.
7. Study of Malaysian policies about the education of children with SEN and possible changes in current policies to support IE.
8. Study of the possibility of combining the education of children with SEN under the Education Ministry and the National Unity and Social Development Ministry

under one education system.

9. Study of the possibility of educating children with SEN under the National Unity and Social Development in mainstream primary schools.
10. Study of the management of resources to support IE.

Appendices

Appendix 1

Matrix used as item content guide for the attitude scale of PSTA

(Number in the grid indicates the item number as it appears in the PSTA attitudinal scale)

Hypothesised domains	Cognitive	Affective	Behavioural	Relation
1. Philosophy of inclusive education				Child
				Teacher
2. Principles of the 'caring society'	1	10, 11, 12	32	Educational environment
				Child
				Teacher
	2	13, 14		Educational environment
3. Types of children with SEN under the responsibility of the Malaysian Education special education programme		15, 16, 17	33	Child
				Teacher
4. Effect on the social, emotional and cognitive development of children with SEN in regular classroom as the result of IE				Educational environment
		18, 19, 20		Child
				Teacher
				Educational environment
5. Cognitive development of children with SEN		27, 28, 29		Child
				Teacher
6. The behaviour of children with SEN				Educational environment
		23, 24		Child
				Teacher
				Educational environment
7. Effect on 'normal' children's academic development as the results of IE		26		Educational environment
		21		Child
		22		Teacher
8. Effect on teachers' workload and other responsibilities				Educational environment
				Child
		23		Teacher
				Educational environment
9. Perceived abilities to teach children with SEN				Child
	3, 4, 5, 6	30	35	Teacher
			36	Educational environment
10. Readiness of mainstream schools for IE				Child
		31	38, 39	Teacher
	7, 8, 9		37	Educational environment

Primary School Teachers' Attitudes (PSTA)

303

	3. Mental retardation	

8. Does your school have trained teachers for special children?

Yes

☐

No

☐
☐

9. If yes, i. state types (Mark x all that is relevant)	1. Hearing impairment	
	2. Visual impairment	
	3. Mental retardation	

☐

10. Does your school have a special education class?

Yes

☐

No

☐
☐

11. If yes, i. state types (Mark x all that is relevant)	1. Hearing impairment	
	2. Visual impairment	
	3. Mentally retarded	

☐

12. Does your school have a special education school in the immediate neighbourhood?

Yes

☐

No

☐
☐

13. If yes, i. state types (Mark x all that is relevant)	1. Hearing impairment	
	2. Visual impairment	

☐

14. Is your school a special education school?

Yes

☐

1

No

☐

2

☐
☐

9. If yes, i. state types (Mark x all that is relevant)	1. Hearing impairment	
	2. Visual impairment	

Attitudinal Scale

Please respond honestly to **ALL** the items below. Please remember there are no right or wrong answers.

To respond to all the items, circle a number each time.

1. Circle 1 if you **STRONGLY DISAGREE (SD)** with this statement.
2. Circle 2 if you **DISAGREE (S)** with this statement.
3. Circle 3 if you **UNDECIDED (U)** with this statement.
4. Circle 4 if you **AGREE (A)** with this statement.
5. Circle 5 if you **STRONGLY AGREE (SA)** with this statement.

No.	SECTION A	SD	D	U	A	SA	
1.	Regular teachers do not understand the Education Ministry's rationale for including children with disabilities in regular classes.	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="text"/>
2.	Regular teachers are well versed in the concept of the "caring society"	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="text"/>
3.	Regular teachers have the necessary skills to teach children deemed mentally retarded.	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="text"/>
4.	Including children with disabilities in regular classes would not necessitate retraining of regular teachers.	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="text"/>
5.	Regular teachers do not have the necessary skills to teach deaf children.	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="text"/>
6.	Regular teachers do not have the necessary skills to teach blind children.	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="text"/>
7.	Regular teachers frequently discuss in school meetings the inclusion of children with disabilities in regular classes.	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="text"/>
8.	Regular teachers have read many printed materials available in school on the inclusion of children with disabilities in regular classes.	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="text"/>
9.	Regular teachers have frequent informal talks with head teachers on the possibility of children with disabilities being included in regular classes.	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="text"/>

To respond to all the items, circle a number each time.

1. Circle 1 if you **STRONGLY DISAGREE (SD)** with this statement.
2. Circle 2 if you **DISAGREE (S)** with this statement.
3. Circle 3 if you **UNDECIDED (U)** with this statement.
4. Circle 4 if you **AGREE (A)** with this statement.
5. Circle 5 if you **STRONGLY AGREE (SA)** with this statement.

No.	SECTION B	SD	D	U	A	SA	
10.	Children with disabilities have the right to be in regular classes.	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="text"/>
11.	Children with disabilities and normal children should not be educated together.	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="text"/>
12.	The educational needs of children with disabilities can best be served through separate special schools or classes.	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="text"/>
13.	The Education Ministry is right in giving special attention to the educational needs of children with disabilities.	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="text"/>
14.	Exposure to children with disabilities will not encourage normal children to be more caring towards disabled persons.	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="text"/>
15.	It is appropriate to fully include children deemed mentally retarded in regular classes.	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="text"/>
16.	Children who cannot hear conversational speech should not be taught in regular classes.	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="text"/>
17.	Children who use Braille should be taught in separate classes.	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="text"/>
18.	Children with disabilities would gain more academically by being educated in regular classes.	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="text"/>
19.	The emotional development of children with disabilities would not be promoted if included in regular classes.	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="text"/>
20.	Children with disabilities would be able to learn more appropriate social skills if taught in regular classes.	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="text"/>
21.	The academic achievements of normal children would be adversely affected if taught together with children with disabilities.	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="text"/>

- | | | | | | | | |
|-----|--|---|---|---|---|---|----------------------|
| 22. | Children with disabilities would not take more than their appropriate share of regular teachers' time. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | <input type="text"/> |
| 23. | Including children with disabilities would increase regular teachers' workloads. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | <input type="text"/> |

To respond to all the items, circle a number each time.

1. Circle 1 if you **STRONGLY DISAGREE (SD)** with this statement.
2. Circle 2 if you **DISAGREE (S)** with this statement.
3. Circle 3 if you **UNDECIDED (U)** with this statement.
4. Circle 4 if you **AGREE (A)** with this statement.
5. Circle 5 if you **STRONGLY AGREE (SA)** with this statement.

- | | | SD | D | U | A | SA | |
|-----|--|----|---|---|---|----|----------------------|
| 24. | The behaviours of mentally retarded children would make inclusion impractical. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | <input type="text"/> |
| 25. | Blind children would be able to move easily in regular classes. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | <input type="text"/> |
| 26. | The communication difficulties of deaf children would not create confusion in regular classes. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | <input type="text"/> |
| 27. | Children deemed mentally retarded would be able to cope with non-academic subjects only. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | <input type="text"/> |
| 28. | Blind children would be able to cope with all school subjects. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | <input type="text"/> |
| 29. | Deaf children would be able to cope with all school subjects. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | <input type="text"/> |
| 30. | Teaching children with disabilities should be left to specialist teachers. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | <input type="text"/> |
| 31. | Regular teachers have a responsibility for the education of children with disabilities. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | <input type="text"/> |
| No. | SECTION C | SD | D | U | A | SA | |
| 32. | Regular teachers are supportive of the idea of including children with disabilities in regular classes. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | <input type="text"/> |
| 33. | Regular teachers will accept the inclusion of children with disabilities under present teaching conditions only if | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | <input type="text"/> |

directed.

- | | | | | | | | |
|-----|--|---|---|---|---|---|--------------------------|
| 34. | Regular teachers will only accept the inclusion of children who do not have disruptive behaviours. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 35. | Regular teachers will volunteer to attend relevant in-service training on children with disabilities. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 36. | Regular teachers will accept the inclusion of children with disabilities if relevant specialist support is available. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 37. | Regular teachers will accept children with disabilities voluntarily even though there is no change in current teaching conditions. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 38. | Regular teachers will only accept children with disabilities if given incentives. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 39. | Regular teachers will accept children with disabilities even though their presence will affect the annual appraisal of teaching. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | <input type="checkbox"/> |

40. Please state your views on the Education Ministry's plan to include children with disabilities in regular classes to be taught alongside mainstream children.

41. What changes do you feel need to be made at the primary school level before children with disabilities are included in mainstream classes?

Thank you for your co-oporation.

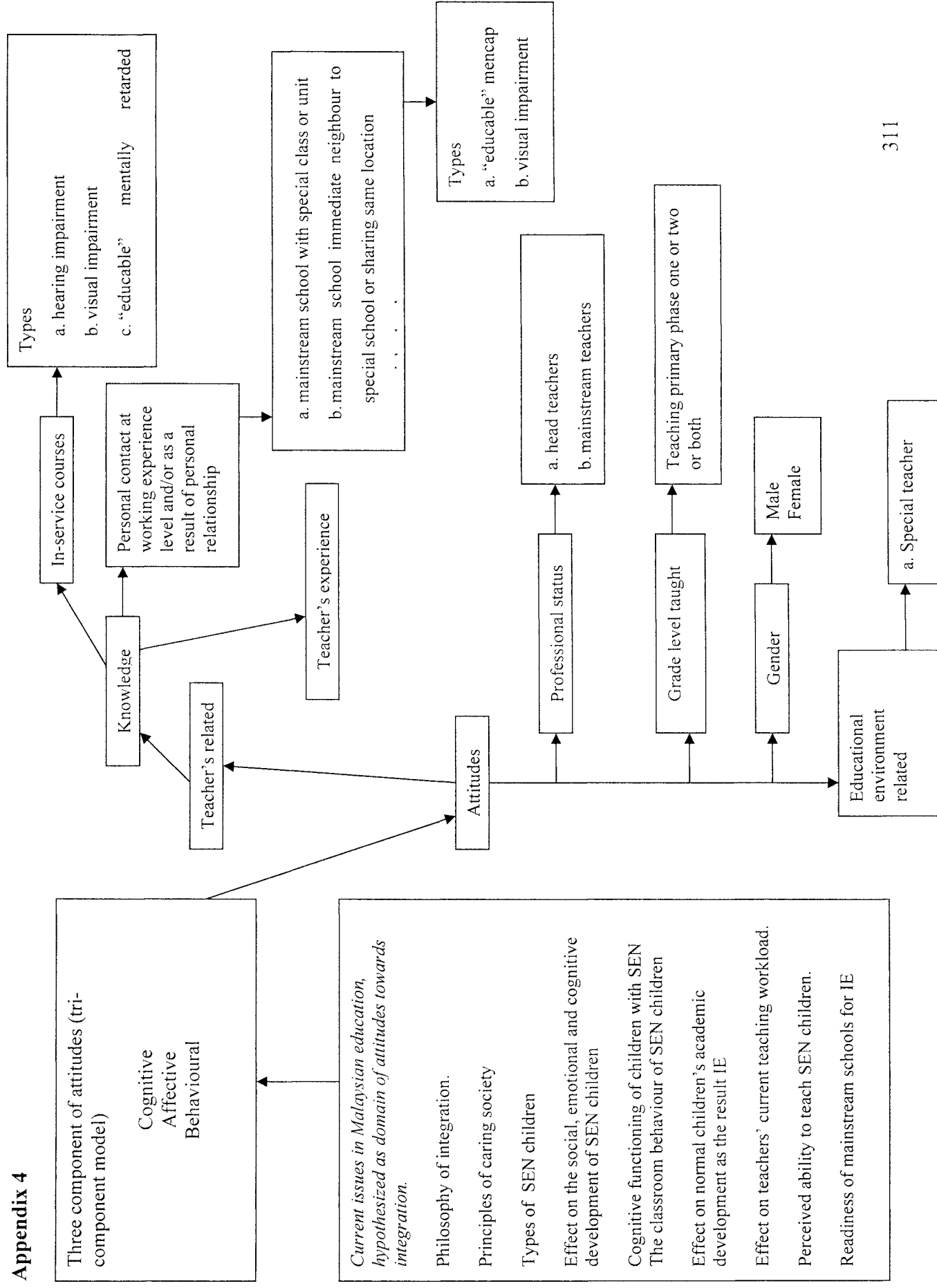
Appendix 3

Rationale of the construction of each individual item in the questionnaire

Item number	Rationale
1	Elicit primary school teachers' (PST) perceived knowledge of the Education Ministry aims and objectives of Inclusive Education programme
2	Elicit PST perceived knowledge about the 'caring society', its aims and objectives.
3, 4, 5, 6	Elicit PST perceived abilities to teach children with SEN within the Education Ministry programme
7, 8, 9	Elicit mainstream school's readiness at least at the planning level for the implementation of Inclusive Education in the school. Also gauge PST exposure towards the idea of Inclusive Education at the school level.
10, 13	Elicit PST perception of the "rights" of children with SEN to be educated together with 'normal' children in regular classes.
11, 12, 30, 31	Elicit PST feeling towards inclusion of children with SEN in regular classes, as regards inclusion or separation.
14, 21, 22	Elicit PST perceived affect on 'normal' children's academic development as the results of Inclusive Education.
15, 16, 17, 24, 25, 26	Elicit PST perceived suitability of children with SEN to be included in regular classes.
18, 19, 20	Elicit PST teachers' perceived advantages /disadvantage to development of children with SEN when included in regular classes.
23	Elicit PST perceived increase in the amount of responsibility if Inclusive Education is implemented in Malaysian primary schools.
27, 28, 29	Elicit MPST perceived suitability of the current Malaysian primary school National Curriculum for children with SEN.

32	Elicit PST support for the Education Ministry's Inclusive Education programme.
33, 34, 36, 37, 38, 39	Elicit some of the school conditions that need to be changed if PST is to accept Inclusive Education implementation in Malaysian primary schools.
35	Elicit willingness of PST to develop skills to teach children with SEN.

Appendix 4



Appendix 5

School Health, Community and Education, Studies

Coach Lane, Benton
Northumbria University
Newcastle upon Tyne

Inclusive Education in Malaysia: Mainstream Primary Teachers' Attitudes to Change of Policy and Practices

Dear teacher,

I am a Ph.D. student sponsored by the Ministry of Education of Malaysia, currently studying at Northumbria University in the United Kingdom, undertaking a study on the above topic. The main aim of the study is to gather teachers' perspectives on the implementation of Inclusive Education in Malaysian schools.

For your information, Inclusive Education in Malaysian schools is a programme to include children with special educational needs (children with hearing and visual impairment, and children with mental retardation) under the Education Ministry special education responsibilities in ordinary mainstream classes with 'normal' mainstream children to be taught by regular class teachers.

Again for your information, children with special educational needs under the Ministry of Education special education programme are currently being educated separately from 'normal' mainstream children in special education schools or special education classes in mainstream schools.

In order to gather useful data, I hope that you will respond to all items in the questionnaire as honestly as possible. All information given will be held in the strictest of confidence, and only retained for my use within this study. This data will be held under secure conditions and destroyed at the end of the study.

It is also hoped that the findings of this study will be helpful to the Ministry of Education's Special Education Department in planning strategies to support teachers in the implementation of Inclusive Education in Malaysia.

For the attention of:

1. Regular mainstream class teachers
2. Headteachers, special and remedial education teachers in mainstream schools
3. Teachers in special education primary schools .

Your co-operation is requested and greatly welcomed

Thank you

Abdul Aziz Jantan

Appendix 6

No : 		Untuk kegunaan rasmi 			
School : 		 			
Sila tuliskan butiran peribadi anda dalam petak yang disediakan atau tandakan X pada petak-petak yang berkenaan.					
1. Jantina	L 	P 	2. Umur		
3. Pengalaman mengajar					
4. Status pekerjaan sekarang	1. Guru Besar				
	2. Penolong Kanan / Ko-kurikulum				
	3. Penyelia Petang				
	4. Guru Kelas Biasa				
	5. Guru Kelas Pendidikan Khas (kanak-kanak cacat)				
	6. Guru Kelas Pendidikan Pemulihan				
	7. Guru Pakar Matapelajaran				
5. Peringkat mengajar :		Tahap	1		2
(tandakan semua yang berkenaan)					
6. Pernahkah anda mengikuti kursus dalam perkhidmatan di bidang Pendidikan Khas (pendidikan kanak-kanak cacat bermasalah pembelajaran)?					
Ya		Tidak			
7. Jika ya i. Nyatakan jenis kursus :			1. Cacat pendengaran		
(Cross all that is relevant)					

	2. Cacat pendengaran	
	3. Terencat akal	

8. Adakah sekolah anda mempunyai guru yang terlatih untuk mengajar kanak-kanak khas (cacat)?

Ya ☐

Tidak ☐

9. Jika ya i. Nyatakan jenis pengkhususan: (Tandakan semua yang berkenaan)	1. Cacat Pendengaran	
	2. Cacat Penglihatan	
	3. Terencat akal	

10. Adakah sekolah anda mempunyai kelas **Pendidikan Khas** (Kelas khas kanak-kanak cacat)?

Yes ☐

No ☐

11. Jika ya i. Nyatakan jenis kelas : (Tandakan semua yang berkenaan)	1. Cacat Pendengaran	
	2. Cacat Penglihatan	
	3. Terencat akal	

12. Adakah sekolah anda berjiran dengan sekolah **Pendidikan Khas** (Kanak-kanak cacat)?

Ya ☐

Tidak ☐

13. Jika ya i. Nyatakan jenis pendidikan khas: (Tandakan semua yang berkenaan)	1. Cacat pendengaran	
	2. Cacat Penglihatan	

14. Adakah sekolah anda sekolah Pendidikan Khas (Kanak-kanak cacat)?

Ya ☐

Tidak ☐

15. Jika ya i. Nyatakan jenis pendidikan khas : (Tandakan semua yang berkenaan)	1. Cacat Pendengaran	
	2. Cacat Penglihatan	

Sila jawab SEMUA soalan soalselidik berikut. Untuk makluman anda tiada jawapan yang dinilai betul atau salah. Jawapan IKHLAS anda amat diharapkan.

Cara untuk menjawab soalan-soalan di bawah ialah dengan,

- A. membulatkan **1** jika anda **AMAT TIDAK BERSETUJU (ATB)** dengan kenyataan tersebut.
- B. membulatkan **2** jika anda **TIDAK BERSETUJU (TB)** dengan kenyataan tersebut.
- C. membulatkan **3** jika anda **KURANG PASTI (KP)** dengan kenyataan tersebut.
- D. membulatkan **4** jika anda **BERSETUJU (B)** dengan kenyataan tersebut.
- E. membulatkan **5** jika anda **AMAT BERSETUJU (AB)** dengan kenyataan tersebut.

No.	BAHAGIAN A	ATB	TB	KP	B	AB	
1.	Guru kelas biasa tidak memahami rasional Kementerian Pendidikan hendak memasukkan kanak-kanak cacat ke dalam kelas biasa.	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="text"/>

2.	Guru kelas biasa amat memahami konsep 'masyarakat penyayang'.	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="text"/>
3.	Guru kelas biasa mempunyai kemahiran-kemahiran yang diperlukan untuk mengajar kanak-kanak yang dianggap sebagai terencat akal.	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="text"/>
4.	Penyertaan kanak-kanak cacat ke dalam kelas biasa tidak memerlukan latihan semula bagi guru-guru kelas biasa.	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="text"/>
5.	Guru kelas biasa tidak mempunyai kemahiran yang diperlukan untuk mengajar kanak-kanak cacat penglihatan.	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="text"/>
6.	Guru kelas biasa tidak mempunyai kemahiran yang diperlukan untuk mengajar kanak-kanak cacat pendengaran.	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="text"/>
7.	Penyertaan kanak-kanak cacat ke dalam kelas biasa sering dibincangkan semasa mesyuarat sekolah.	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="text"/>
8.	Guru kelas biasa banyak membaca bahan-bahan bercetak yang dibekalkan ke sekolah tentang kemasukan kanak-kanak cacat ke dalam kelas biasa.	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="text"/>
9.	Guru kelas biasa sering berbincang dengan guru besar secara tidak rasmi tentang kemungkinan kanak-kanak cacat dimasukkan ke dalam kelas biasa.	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="text"/>

Sila jawab SEMUA soalan soalselidik berikut. Untuk makluman anda **tiada jawapan yang dinilai betul atau salah.** Jawapan IKHLAS anda amat diharapkan.

Cara untuk menjawab soalan-soalan di bawah ialah dengan,

- A. membulatkan **1** jika anda **AMAT TIDAK BERSETUJU (ATB)** dengan kenyataan tersebut.
- B. membulatkan **2** jika anda **TIDAK BERSETUJU (TB)** dengan kenyataan tersebut.
- C. membulatkan **3** jika anda **KURANG PASTI (KP)** dengan kenyataan tersebut.
- D. membulatkan **4** jika anda **BERSETUJU (B)** dengan kenyataan tersebut.
- E. membulatkan **5** jika anda **AMAT BERSETUJU (AB)** dengan kenyataan tersebut.

No.	BAHAGIAN B	ATB	TB	KP	B	AB	
10.	Kanak-kanak cacat mempunyai hak untuk belajar dalara kelas biasa.	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="text"/>

11.	Kanak-kanak normal tidak seharusnya diajar bersama-sama dengan kanak-kanak cacat.	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="text"/>
12.	Cara terbaik untuk memenuhi keperluan pembelajaran kanak-kanak cacat ialah melalui sekolah/kelas khas yang berasingan.	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="text"/>
13.	Langkah Kementerian Pelajaran memberi keistimewaan terhadap keperluan pendidikan kanak-kanak cacat adalah tepat.	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="text"/>
14.	Pendedahan kanak-kanak normal kepada kanak-kanak cacat tidak akan membuatkan mereka bersuapati terhadap orang-orang cacat.	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="text"/>
15.	Penyertaan sepenuhnya kanak-kanak yang dianggap sebagai terencat akal ke dalam kelas biasa adalah wajar.	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="text"/>
16.	Kanak-kanak yang tidak boleh mendengar perbualan lisan tidak seharusnya diajar di dalam kelas biasa.	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="text"/>
17.	Kanak-kanak yang menggunakan Braille seharusnya diajar dalam kelas yang berasingan dan kelas biasa	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="text"/>
18.	Pencapaian akademik kanak-kanak cacat akan meningkat jika mereka diajar dalam kelas biasa.	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="text"/>
19.	Perkembangan emosi kanak-kanak cacat tidak dapat dipertingkatkan jika mereka dimasukkan ke dalam kelas biasa.	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="text"/>
20.	Kanak-kanak cacat akan dapat mempelajari lebih banyak kemahiran sosial yang sesuai jika diajar di dalam kelas biasa.	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="text"/>

Sila jawab SEMUA soalan soalselidik berikut. Untuk makluman anda **tiada jawapan yang dinilai betul atau salah.** Jawapan IKHLAS anda amat diharapkan.

Cara untuk menjawab soalan-soalan di bawah ialah dengan,

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- B. membulatkan **2** jika anda **TIDAK BERSETUJU (TB)** dengan kenyataan tersebut.
- C. membulatkan **3** jika anda **KURANG PASTI (KP)** dengan kenyataan tersebut.
- D. membulatkan **4** jika anda **BERSETUJU (B)** dengan kenyataan tersebut.
- E. membulatkan **5** jika anda **AMAT BERSETUJU (AB)** dengan kenyataan tersebut.

		ATB	TB	KP	B	AB	
21.	Pencapaian akademik kanak-kanak normal akan terjejas jika mereka diajar bersama-sama dengan kanak-kanak cacat.	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="text"/>

22.	Kanak-kanak cacat tidak akan mengambil peruntukan masa mengajar guru kelas biasa lebih dari sepatutnya.	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="text"/>
23.	Penyertaan kanak-kanak cacat dalam kelas biasa akan menambahkan beban kerja guru kelas biasa.	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="text"/>
24.	Tingkahtlaku kanak-kanak yang dianggap sebagai terencat akal akan membuat kemasukkan mereka ke dalam kelas biasa tidak praktikal.	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="text"/>
25.	Kanak-kanak cacat penglihatan tidak akan dapat bergerak dengan mudah bila berada di kelas biasa.	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="text"/>
26.	Kesukaran berkomunikasi kanak-kanak cacat pendengaran tidak akan menimbulkan kekeliruan di dalam kelas biasa.	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="text"/>
27.	Kanak-kanak yang dianggap sebagai terencat akal hanya mampu mengikuti pembelajaran bagi subjek yang bukan akademik sahaja.	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="text"/>
28.	Kanak-kanak cacat penglihatan mampu memenuhi pembelajaran bagi semua subjek sekolah.	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="text"/>
29.	Kanak-kanak cacat pendengaran mampu memenuhi tuntutan pembelajaran bagi semua subjek sekolah.	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="text"/>
30.	Mengajar kanak-kanak cacat patut diserahkan sepenuhnya kepada guru-guru yang terlatih dalam Pendidikan Khas.	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="text"/>
31.	Guru kelas biasa mempunyai tanggungjawab dalam mendidik kanak-kanak cacat.	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="text"/>

Sila jawab SEMUA soalan soalselidik berikut. Untuk makluman anda **tiada jawapan yang dinilai betul atau salah**. Jawapan IKHLAS anda amat diharapkan.

Cara untuk menjawab soalan-soalan di bawah ialah dengan,

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- B. membulatkan **2** jika anda **TIDAK BERSETUJU (TB)** dengan kenyataan tersebut.
- C. membulatkan **3** jika anda **KURANG PASTI (KP)** dengan kenyataan tersebut.
- D. membulatkan **4** jika anda **BERSETUJU (B)** dengan kenyataan tersebut.
- E. membulatkan **5** jika anda **AMAT BERSETUJU (AB)** dengan kenyataan tersebut.

No.	BAHAGIAN C	SD	D	U	A	SA	
32.	Guru kelas biasa akan menyokong idea memasukkan kanak-kanak cacat ke dalam kelas biasa.	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="text"/>

- | | | | | | | | |
|-----|---|---|---|---|---|---|----------------------|
| 33. | Guru kelas biasa hanya akan menerima kemasukan kanak-kanak cacat ke dalam kelas biasa dalam keadaan pengajaran yang ada sekarang dengan arahan sahaja. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | <input type="text"/> |
| 34. | Guru kelas biasa akan hanya menerima kemasukan kanak-kanak cacat yang tidak mempunyai masalah tingkahlaku sahaja ke dalam kelas biasa. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | <input type="text"/> |
| 35. | Guru kelas biasa secara sukarela akan menghadiri kursus dalam perkhidmaian bagi Pendidikan Khas jika kanak-kanak cacat dimasukkan ke dalam kelas biasa. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | <input type="text"/> |
| 36. | Guru kelas biasa akan menerima kemasukan kanak-kanak cacat dalam kelas biasa jika dibantu oleh guru terlatih dalam Pendidikan Khas yang berkenaan. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | <input type="text"/> |
| 37. | Guru kelas biasa akan menerima kemasukan kanak-kanak cacat ke dalam kelas biasa walaupun tiada perubahan kepada keadaan pengajaran semasa. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | <input type="text"/> |
| 38. | Guru kelas biasa akan menerima kemasukan kanak-kanak cacat ke dalam kelas biasa jika diberi insentif (ganjaran). | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | <input type="text"/> |
| 39. | Guru kelas biasa akan menerima penyertaan kanak-kanak cacat dalam kelas biasa walaupun kehadiran mereka ini akan mempengaruhi penilaian prestasi tahunan. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | <input type="text"/> |
| 40. | Sila berikan pendapat anda tentang hasrat Kementerian Pendidikan untuk memasukkan anak-kanak cacat ke dalam kelas biasa untuk diajar bersama-sama dengan kanak-kanak biasa (normal). | | | | | | |
| 41. | Pada pandangan anda apakah perubahan-perubahan (jika ada) yang perlu dilakukan terlebih dahulu di peringkat sekolah sebelum perancangan memasukkan kanak-kanak cacat ke dalam kelas biasa dilaksanakan. | | | | | | |

Terima kasih kerana sudi menjawab soal selidik ini. Kerjasama anda amat di hargai.

Appendix 7

Rational of the interview questions	
Question number	Rational
	Cognitive
3, 4, 5	Gauge perceived knowledge of Inclusive Education (IE).
1, 2	Gauge perceived knowledge of children with SEN under the Education Ministry's special education program.
6	Perceived ability to teach children with SEN.
	Affective
8	Teachers' feelings about IE.
9	Advantages/disadvantages of IE to children with SEN.
10	Perceived suitability of KBSR (primary school curriculum) for the education of children with SEN.
11	Perceived effect of IE on teachers' workload.
12	Perceived effect of IE on other children's education.
13	Perceived effect of IE on school (personal) appraisal.
14	Children with SEN favoured for IE.
	Conative
7	Willingness to attend in-service course as the result of IE implementation.
15	Willingness to support IE.
16, 17, 20	Conditions to support IE implementation.
	General
18	Perceived barriers to IE implementation.
19	Changes suggested before IE implementation.

Appendix 8

The Interview Schedule: English Version

No : <table border="1" style="display: inline-table; width: 100px; height: 20px; vertical-align: middle;"></table> School : <table border="1" style="display: inline-table; width: 100px; height: 20px; vertical-align: middle;"></table>				For Office Only <table border="1" style="width: 100%; height: 20px;"></table> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; height: 20px;"></table>													
Please fill in the relevant information of your personal details by marking with a cross (X) or by printing required information in the box provided																	
1. Gender : <table border="1" style="display: inline-table; width: 40px; height: 20px; vertical-align: middle; text-align: center;">M</table> <table border="1" style="display: inline-table; width: 40px; height: 20px; vertical-align: middle;"></table>		<table border="1" style="display: inline-table; width: 40px; height: 20px; vertical-align: middle; text-align: center;">F</table> <table border="1" style="display: inline-table; width: 40px; height: 20px; vertical-align: middle;"></table>		2. Age <table border="1" style="display: inline-table; width: 40px; height: 20px; vertical-align: middle;"></table>													
3. No. of years teaching : <table border="1" style="display: inline-table; width: 40px; height: 20px; vertical-align: middle;"></table>				<table border="1" style="display: inline-table; width: 40px; height: 20px; vertical-align: middle;"></table>													
4. Current professional status : (Mark X all that is relevant)				<table border="1" style="width: 100%; height: 20px;"></table>													
1. Head teacher				<table border="1" style="width: 100%; height: 20px;"></table>													
2. Regular class teacher				<table border="1" style="width: 100%; height: 20px;"></table>													
3. Special education teacher				<table border="1" style="width: 100%; height: 20px;"></table>													
4. Remedial education teacher				<table border="1" style="width: 100%; height: 20px;"></table>													
<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 30%;">5. Grade level taught : (Mark X all that is relevant)</td> <td style="width: 20%;">Primary : Phase</td> <td style="width: 10%;">1</td> <td style="width: 10%;">2</td> <td style="width: 10%;"></td> <td style="width: 10%;"></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </table>						5. Grade level taught : (Mark X all that is relevant)	Primary : Phase	1	2								
5. Grade level taught : (Mark X all that is relevant)	Primary : Phase	1	2														
6. Have you ever attended an in-service course in special education?																	
Yes <table border="1" style="display: inline-table; width: 40px; height: 20px; vertical-align: middle;"></table>		No <table border="1" style="display: inline-table; width: 40px; height: 20px; vertical-align: middle;"></table>		<table border="1" style="width: 100%; height: 20px;"></table>													
<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 45%;">7. If yes, i. state types (Mark X all that is relevant)</td> <td style="width: 30%;">1. Hearing impairment</td> <td style="width: 25%;"></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </table>						7. If yes, i. state types (Mark X all that is relevant)	1. Hearing impairment										
7. If yes, i. state types (Mark X all that is relevant)	1. Hearing impairment																

	2. Visual impairment	
	3. Mental retardation	

8. Does your school have trained teachers for special children?

Yes ☐

No ☐

☐

9. If yes, i. state types (Mark X all that is relevant)	1. Hearing impairment	
	2. Visual impairment	
	3. Mental retardation	

☐

10. Does your school have a special education class?

Yes ☐

No ☐

☐

11. If yes, i. state types (Mark X all that is relevant)	1. Hearing impairment	
	2. Visual impairment	
	3. Mentally retarded	

☐

12. Does your school have a special education school in the immediate neighbourhood?

Yes ☐

No ☐

☐

13. If yes, i. state type (Mark X all that is relevant)	1. Hearing impairment	
	2. Visual impairment	

☐

14. Is your school a special education school?

Yes ☐ 1

No ☐ 2

☐

9. If yes, i. state type (Mark X all that is relevant)	1. Hearing impairment	
	2. Visual impairment	

☐

Respondent name/Code number

School :	
----------	--

Type number :	
---------------	--

Interview Protocol

I am doing a study on teacher attitudes towards the intended plan to include children with special educational needs under the Education Ministry's special education programme in mainstream classes. I am doing this study in order to gain a better understanding of teacher attitudes towards this idea, and I hope to be able to forward teachers' views on this issue to the relevant education authorities for consideration, prior to its implementation in primary schools.

I would like to record this interview with your permission because that would be a true record of our conversation. In no way would your identity be revealed. Data used will be treated in strict confidence.

Thank you for your co-operation.

Interview schedule

Note: Term 'teacher/s (colleague/s)' when used in individual interviews with headteachers was changed as appropriate to 'you' when interviewing individual regular class teachers.

Cognitive

1. Have you read any of the circulars, bulletins or any printed materials available in this school on the Education Ministry's special education programme and its intention to include children with

special educational needs in mainstream classes?)

yes

no
why not?

2. What does the term children with SEN mean to you?
(For schools with SEN class/es)
 - A. How well do you think your teacher/s (colleague/s) know the children with SEN in your school? Please elaborate.
3. What do you understand by the term Inclusive Education?
4. Have you discussed with your teacher/s (colleague/s) about the possibility of children with SEN being included in mainstream classes?
 - i.

yes		no
formally	informally	why not?
5. How would you rate your teacher/s(colleague/s)' understanding of the Education Ministry's rationale for wanting to include children with SEN in mainstream classes? **Why?**
6. How would you rate your teacher/s (colleague/s)' abilities to teach children with SEN ? (visual impairments, hearing impairments, and mentally retarded). **Why?**
7. Do you think your teacher/s (colleague/s) would be willing to attend the relevant in-service courses if children with SEN are included in mainstream classes? **Why?**

Affective

8. Do you think children with SEN have the right to be educated in mainstream classes with other children? **Why?**
9. Do you feel it would be educationally advantageous for children with SEN to be included in mainstream classes? **Why?**
10. What is your comment on the suitability of the current KBSR (primary schools curriculum) syllabus content for the education of children with SEN?
11. In what way do you think your school's teachers' workload would be affected if children with SEN are included in mainstream classes (e.g. yearly lesson plan, ability to finish the required syllabus contents in time, and any other way)?

12. What effect do you think including children with SEN in mainstream classes would have on other children in the class (e.g. their academic achievement, development of caring feelings towards persons with disabilities, their response towards children with SEN behaviours, and any other way)?

13. How do you feel your school's yearly appraisal (ranking by the State Education Department) would be affected by the inclusion of children with SEN in mainstream classes?

Positive answer

Negative answer

Do you mind? (Yes, No)

Can you suggest other ways the school should be assessed if it practised inclusion?

14. Of the three groups of children with SEN under the Education Ministry's special education programme, which group do you feel is the most and least suitable for inclusion? **Why?**

Conative

15. Do you think your teacher/s (colleague/s) would support the Education Ministry's plan to include children with SEN in mainstream classes in this school? **Why?**

16. Do you feel your school is ready to include children with disabilities in mainstream classes?

Yes

No

What type of SEN?

Why?

Please elaborate

17. Under what condition/s do you think you would accept children with SEN into your class (e.g. only if directed to do so, types of children with SEN, availability of specialist support, incentives (types), class size, annual appraisal, no change to the current teaching environment) (for every condition)? **Why?**

18. Under the prevalent educational conditions, what do you think is/are the barrier/s to Inclusive Education being implemented in your school? **Why?**

19. What changes would you like to see happening in your school prior to Inclusive Education implementation? **Why?**

20. Can you suggest ways on how to gain mainstream teachers' support in the implementation of IE in

this school?

21. Is there anything more you would like to add concerning the inclusion of children with disabilities in mainstream classes?

Appendix 9

No : <table border="1" style="display: inline-table; width: 100px; height: 20px; vertical-align: middle;"></table>		Untuk kegunaan rasmi <table border="1" style="display: inline-table; width: 40px; height: 20px;"></table> <table border="1" style="display: inline-table; width: 40px; height: 20px;"></table>		
Sekolah : <table border="1" style="display: inline-table; width: 100px; height: 20px; vertical-align: middle;"></table>				
Sila tuliskan butiran peribadi anda dalam petak yang disediakan atau tandakan X pada petak-petak yang berkenaan.				
1. Jantina	<table border="1" style="display: inline-table; width: 30px; height: 20px; text-align: center;">L</table> <table border="1" style="display: inline-table; width: 30px; height: 20px;"></table>	<table border="1" style="display: inline-table; width: 30px; height: 20px; text-align: center;">P</table> <table border="1" style="display: inline-table; width: 30px; height: 20px;"></table>	2. Umur	<table border="1" style="display: inline-table; width: 30px; height: 20px;"></table>
3. Pengalaman mengajar		<table border="1" style="display: inline-table; width: 30px; height: 20px;"></table>		
4. Status pekerjaan sekarang	1. Guru Besar		<table border="1" style="display: inline-table; width: 30px; height: 20px;"></table>	
	2. Guru Kelas Biasa		<table border="1" style="display: inline-table; width: 30px; height: 20px;"></table>	
	3. Guru Kelas Pendidikan Khas		<table border="1" style="display: inline-table; width: 30px; height: 20px;"></table>	
	4. Guru Kelas Pendidikan Pemulihan		<table border="1" style="display: inline-table; width: 30px; height: 20px;"></table>	
5. Peringkat mengajar :		Tahap		
(tandakan semua yang berkenaan)		1	2	3
		<table border="1" style="display: inline-table; width: 30px; height: 20px;"></table>	<table border="1" style="display: inline-table; width: 30px; height: 20px;"></table>	<table border="1" style="display: inline-table; width: 30px; height: 20px;"></table>
6. Pernahkah anda mengikuti kursus dalam perkhidmatan di bidang Pendidikan Khas (pendidikan kanak-kanak cacat bermasalah pembelajaran)?				
Ya		Tidak		
<table border="1" style="display: inline-table; width: 30px; height: 20px;"></table>		<table border="1" style="display: inline-table; width: 30px; height: 20px;"></table>		
7. Jika ya i. Nyatakan jenis kursus :		1. Cacat pendengaran		
(Tandakan semua yang berkenaan)				
		2. Cacat pendengaran		
		3. Terencat akal		
8. Adakah sekolah anda mempunyai guru yang terlatih untuk mengajar kanak-kanak khas (cacat)?				
<table border="1" style="display: inline-table; width: 30px; height: 20px;"></table>				

Ya ☐

Tidak ☐

9. Jika ya i. Nyatakan jenis pengkhususan: (Tandakan semua yang berkenaan)	1. Cacat Pendengaran	<input type="checkbox"/>
	2. Cacat Penglihatan	<input type="checkbox"/>
	3. Terencat akal	<input type="checkbox"/>

10. Adakah sekolah anda mempunyai kelas **Pendidikan Khas** (Kelas khas kanak-kanak cacat)?

Ya ☐

Tidak ☐

11. Jika ya i. Nyatakan jenis kelas : (Tandakan semua yang berkenaan)	1. Cacat Pendengaran	<input type="checkbox"/>
	2. Cacat Penglihatan	<input type="checkbox"/>
	3. Terencat akal	<input type="checkbox"/>

12. Adakah sekolah anda berjiran dengan sekolah **Pendidikan Khas** (Kanak-kanak cacat)?

Ya ☐

Tidak ☐

13. Jika ya i. Nyatakan jenis pendidikan khas: (Tandakan semua yang berkenaan)	1. Cacat pendengaran	<input type="checkbox"/>
	2. Cacat Penglihatan	<input type="checkbox"/>

14. Adakah sekolah anda sekolah Pendidikan Khas (Kanak-kanak cacat)?

Ya ☐

Tidak ☐

15. Jika ya i. Nyatakan jenis pendidikan khas : (Tandakan semua yang berkenaan)	1. Cacat Pendengaran	<input type="checkbox"/>
	2. Cacat Penglihatan	<input type="checkbox"/>

Respondent name/Code number

School :

Type number :

Interview Protocol

I am doing a study on teacher attitudes towards the intended plan to include children with special educational needs under the Education Ministry's special education programme in mainstream classes. I am doing this study in order to gain a better understanding of teachers' attitudes towards this idea, and hope to be able to forward teachers' views on this issue to the relevant education authorities for consideration, prior to its implementation in primary schools.

I would like to record this interview with your permission because that would be a true record of our conversation. In no way would your identity be revealed, but only recorded by a code number. Data used will be treated in strict confidence.

Thank you for your co-operation.

Struktur temubual

Soalan-soalan temu-bual dengan Guru Besar dan Guru Pendidikan Khas

Kognitif

1. Adakah sekolah ini menerima pekeliling, buliten atau bahan-bahan bercetak tentang :
 - a. program pendidikan khas Kementerian Pendidikan?
 - b. hasrat Kementerian hendak memasukkan Kanak-kanak pendidikan khas (KKPK) ke dalam kelas biasa?

Ya

Tidak
Sebab?

2. Boleh tak cikgu jelaskan apa yang cikgu faham dengan istilah KKPK?
(Bagi sekolah yang ada kelas khas: Pada skala 1 hinggg 3)
 - a. sejauh manakah cikgu rasa guru-guru sekolah ini mengenali KKPK sekolah ini?
Mengapa?
 - b. sejauh manakah cikgu rasa guru-guru sekolah ini mengetahui tentang masalah pembelajaran KKPK sekolah ini? **Mengapa?**

3. Boleh tak cikgu jelaskan apa yang cikgu faham dengan istilah Pendidikan inklusif?
4. Pernahkah cikgu berbincang dengan guru-guru sekolah ini tentang kemungkinan KKPK dimasukkan ke dalam kelas mereka?
 - Ya
 - i. secara formal
 - ii. secara tidak formal

Tidak
sebab?

Soalan 6 dan 7 : Pada skala 1 hingga 3

5. Sejauh mana cikgu rasa guru-guru sekolah ini memahami rasional Kementerian hendak

melaksanakan pendidikan inklusif di peringkat sekolah rendah? **Sebab?**

6. Sejauh manakah cikgu rasa kebolehan guru-guru sekolah ini untuk mengajar kanak-kanak cacat penglihatan, pendengaran dan rencatan akal? **Mengapa?**
7. Pada pandangan cikgu mahukah guru-guru sekolah ini secara sukarela mengikuti kursus dalam perkhidmatan pendidikan khas yang berkenaan jika Pendidikan inklusif dilaksanakan di sekolah ini? **Mengapa?**

Afektif

8. Pada pendapat cikgu adakah KKPK mempunyai hak untuk belajar di dalam kelas biasa bersama-sama dengan kanak-kanak lain (normal)? **Mengapa?**
9. Pada pandangan cikgu apakah kesan kepada pembelajaran KXPK jika mereka di masukkan ke dalam kelas biasa sekolah ini?
(Kesan dari sudut pencapaian akademik, kemahiran bersosial, lain-lain - Kebaikan/keburukannya)
10. Pada pandangan cikgu adakah isi kandungan kurikulum KBSR sekarang sesuai untuk diajar kepada KKPK? (Ya, Tidak). **Mengapa?**
11. Apakah kesan kepada beban kerja guru-guru sekolah ini jika KKPK dimasukkan ke dalam kelas biasa sekolah ini?
(e.g. perancangan tahunan, menghabiskan silibus, penyediaan rancangan mengajar, lain-lain)
12. Apakah kesan memasukkan KKPK. terhadap kanak-kanak lain (normal) jika dimasukkan ke dalam kelas biasa sekolah ini?
(e.g. pencapaian akademik, pembentukan perasaan penyayang, reaksi cerhadap KKPK, lain-lain)
13. Pada pandangan cikgu adakah memasukkan KKPK. ke dalam kelas biasa sekolah ini akan mempengaruhi prestasi tahunan sekolah ini?
- | | |
|-------------|----------------------|
| Ya | Tidak |
| Tak apa ke? | <u>Sebab?</u> |
| (Ya, Tidak) | |
- Boleh cikgu beri cadangan bagaimana sekolah yang mengamalkan Pendidikan Inklusif patut dinilai?

14. Antara 3 jenis KKPK di Kedah, yang mana paling sesuai dan yang mana paling tidak sesuai untuk Pendidikan Inklusif? **Mengapa?**

Konaktif

Pada skala 1 hingga 3

15. Sejauh mana cikgu rasa sokongan guru-guru sekolah ini terhadap rancangan Kementerian hendak melaksanakan Pendidikan Inklusif di peringkat sekolah rendah? **Sebab?**
16. Adakah sekolah ini mampu buat masa sekarang untuk melaksanakan Pendidikan Inklusif?

Ya
Jenis pendidikan khas yang mana?
Huraian lanjut

Tidak
Sebab?

17. Apa cikgu rasa syarat-syarat penerimaan kemasukkan KXPK ke dalam kelas mereka oleh guru-guru sekolah ini?
(e.g. dengan arahan, jeinis kanak-kanak khas, dengan bantuan guru khas, sias kelas, serta-merta).

Umum

18. Apakah halangan-halangan bagi pelaksanaan Pendidikan Inklusif di sekolah ini sekarang?
19. Apakah perubahan-perubahan yang perlu dilakukan terlebih dahulu di peringkat sekolah ini sebelum Pendidikan Inklusif dilaksanakan?
20. Boleh cikgu beri cadangan bagaiman cara-caranya untuk mendapatkan sokongan guru-guru sekolah ini terhadap perlaksanaan Pendidikan Inklusif di sekolah ini?
21. Ada apa-apa cikgu nak tambah tentang isu Pendidikan Inklusif ini?

Appendix 10

Codes used in analysing open-ended item 40 of the PSTA questionnaire

A : Disagreed Reasons

- A1 : Interfere with normal teaching and learning process
- A2 : Affect mainstream children's academic attainments
- A3 : Increase RMCTs' workloads
- A4 : No skills to teach children with SEN
- A5 : Children with SEN have right to separate education/specialised teaching
- A6 : Class size too high
- A7 : Victimised by mainstream children
- A3 : Children with SEN cannot cope with mainstream learning
- A9 : Unsuitability of KBSR for children with SEN
- A10 : Examination pressure
- A11 : RMCTs' negative acceptance of IE
- A12 : Headteacher's negative acceptance of IE
- A13 : Behavioural problems of children with SEN
- A14 : Inferiority complex of children with SEN
- A15 : Insufficient appropriate resourcing
- A16 : No teacher assistant
- A17 : Children with SEN not interested in IE

B: Undecided Reasons

- B1 : If all teachers involved in IE programme
- B2 : If school community understands IE
- B3 : If RMCTs are trained in special education
- B4 : If appropriate resourcing is available
- 85 : If children with SEN are intellectually able

- 86 : If children with SEN are ready (with prerequisite skills)
- B7 : If children with SEN have mild disabilities
- B8 : If IE implementation is properly planned
- 89 : If children with SEN do not have behavioural problems
- 810 : If for academic subjects only
- 811 : But depends on types of disability
- B12 : But children with SEN have behavioural problems
- B13 : But it will benefit children with SEN social skills only
- B14 : But more work for teachers
- B15 : But too many children in mainstream classes
- B16 : But children with SEN have low intellectual ability
- BI7 : But need to plan carefully
- B18 : But children will develop inferiority complex
- B19 : But schools lack appropriate resources
- B20 : But it will take time to succeed
- B21 : But RMCTs not trained to teach children with SEN

**C : Agreed
Reasons**

- C1 : Development of caring society
- C2 : Equal education opportunities
- C3 : A good idea (no reason)
- C4 : Promote self-esteem of children with SEN
- C5 : Accommodation into mainstream society
- C6 : Promote learning attainments of children with SEN
- C7 : Study at nearest school from home

Appendix 11

Codes used in analysing open-ended item 41 of the PSTA questionnaire

Changes recommended

1. RMCTs given training in special education
2. Provide access to school buildings
3. Provide more classrooms
4. Provide suitable toilets
5. Provide more teaching aids
6. Provide more furniture
7. More information on IE to school in general
8. More information on IE to RMCTs
9. More information on IE to headteachers
10. Prepare mainstream children for IE
11. Reduce class size
12. Provide school with SETs
13. Create the post of teaching assistant
14. Give RMCTs incentives
15. Modify certain aspects of KBSR
16. Prepare children with SEN for IE emotionally
17. Prepare children with SEN with the essential prerequisite skills
18. Reduce teachers' non-teaching workload
19. Reduce teachers' workload
20. School's yearly evaluation not based on examination only
21. Give credits to schools for good IE practice in yearly appraisal
22. Everyone in school involved in IE programme
23. Continuous evaluation of school's IE programme

24. Continuous help to school with IE programme
25. Involve RMCTs who are interested only
26. Inform parents of mainstream children about IE
27. Inform parents of children with SEN about IE
28. Provide the service of educational psychologist
29. Use different criteria to evaluate progress of children with SEN
30. Freedom for RMCT to teach as they deem fit
31. Provide more residential facilities to children with SEN
32. Increase financial support to schools
33. Limit number of children with SEN placed in school

Appendix 12

Codes used to analyse interviews

1A : Circulars/bulletins on special education

1Ai : Had read/received

Reasons

1Aia : Schools have received circulars on SEN programme

1Aii : Had not read/received

Reasons

1Aiaa : Schools had not received circulars

1Aiib : Circulars only for SETs

1Aiic : Not interested because not SET

1B : Circulars/bulletins on IE

1Bi : Had read/received

Reasons

1Bia : Only the questionnaire

1Bii : Had not received/read

Reasons

1Biia : School had not received circulars

2 : Meaning of CSEN (children with special educational needs)

2i : Children with handicap/impairment/disabilities

2ii : Children in (2Ai) and remedial children

2iii : Children with learning problems but not necessarily handicapped

2iv : Children who need specialised teaching

2A : RMCT (regular mainstream classroom teachers) knows school CSEN

2Ai : Quite well

Reasons

2Aia : Regular visit to SECs

2Aii : Moderately well/some do, some don't

Reasons

2Aiiia : Only those who regularly visit SECs

2Aiiib : Very little/only from afar

Reasons

2Aiiia : Not interested in SEN children

2Aiiib : Very few teachers discussed SEN children affairs

3 : Meaning of IE

3i : No comment

3ii : Placing CSEN in mainstream class fully or partly

4 : Discussion about IE

4a : Yes

Reasons

4ai : Only with RMCTs involved in IE

4aii : Only informally

4b : No

Reasons

4bi : Not needed at the moment

4bii : Never occurs to discuss it

5 : Rationales of IE

5a : No comment

5b : Very few RMCTs understand

Reasons

5bi : Lack of information about IE

5bii : Not interested in IE

- 5c : Rationales for IE
- 5ci : Prevents CSEN from having inferiority complex
- 5cii : Accommodate CSEN in mainstream society
- 5ciii : Create caring feeling
- 5civ : Increase CSEN educational development
- 5cv : Cost saving
- 5cvi : Equal educational opportunities
- 5cvii : Able to go to the nearest school from home

6 : RMCTs ability to teach CSEN

6a : Can teach

Reasons

- 6ai : CSEN included had intellectual ability equal to mainstream peers in the class
- 6aii : Just can
- 6aiii : Are trained teachers
- 6aiv : Had experienced teaching remedial children

6b : Undecided

Reasons

- 6bi : Not patient
- 6bii : Depends on types of disabilities

6c : Cannot teach

Reasons

- 6ci : No training
- 6cii : Just cannot
- 6ciii : Never experienced teaching CSEN
- 6civ : No skills to teach CSEN

7 : RMCTs willingness to attend training

7a : Will attend

Reasons

7ai : To learn new skills

7b : Undecided

Reasons

7bi : If directed Tbi: If given information about IE

7biii : Very few RMCTs interested

7biv : If duration of training is shortened

7bv : If have disabled relatives

7c : Reluctant

Reasons

7ci : Not interested

7cii : Personal problems

7ciii : Will retire soon

7civ : Difficult to teach CSEN

7cv : Training too long

8 : Right to IE

8a : Have right

Reason

8ai : Equal education opportunities/Humanitarian

8aii : Socialisation process

8b : Undecided

Reasons

8bi : If CSEN can cope with mainstream learning

8bii : For certain subjects only

8biii : If appropriate resources are available

8c : Disagreed

Reasons

8ci : CSEN have right to be different/specialised provisions

9 : Advantages/Disadvantages of IE to CSEN

9A : Academic achievement

9Ai : Improved

Reasons

9Aia : Learned from mainstream children

9Aib : CSEN have equal intellectual ability to mainstream children

9Aii : Undecided

Reasons

9Aiaa : If RMCTs are committed in their teaching

9Aiab : If RMCTs have required skills

9Aiaic : If CSEN have prerequisite skills

9Aiaid : If CSEN are given adequate individual attention

9Aiaie : Depends on CSEN disabilities

9Aiaif : Never taught CSEN

9Aiaii : Not improved

Reasons

9Aiaia : CSEN will not get individual attention

9Aiaib : Class size high

9Aiaic : CSEN cannot cope with mainstream learning

9Aiaid : RMCTs prioritise mainstream children learning

9B : Social development

9Bi : Improved

Reasons

9Bia : Learned from mainstream children

9Bib : IE will improve CSEN social skills

9Bic : Familiarise CSEN with mainstream children

9Bii : Undecided

Reasons

- 9Biia : If RMCTs play their part
- 9Biib : No experience teaching CSEN
- 9Biic : Not all mainstream children can accept CSEN

- 9c : Emotional development
- 9Ci : Improved

Reasons

- 9Cia : Widen the scope for emotional development
- 9Cib : Boost CSEN confidence
- 9Cii : Undecided

Reasons

- 9Ciia : For some CSEN but not others
- 9Ciib: Difficult for schools practicing streaming
- 9Ciii: Not improved

Reasons

- 9Ciia : CSEN will be embarrassed
- 9Ciib : CSEN will be victimized

- 10 : Suitability of KBSR
- 10a : Suitable

- 10ai : With modification
- 10aii : KBSR is used to teach CSEN

- 10b : Undecided
- 10bi : Depends on phase I or 2
- 10bii : Depends on CSEN intellect
- 10biii : Certain subjects only

- 10C : Not suitable

Reasons

10Ci : Standard too high

10Cii : Too many subjects

11 : Effect on RMCTs' workload

11a : Will increase

Reason

11ai : More lesson preparations

11aii : More attention to CSEN

11aiii : Delay in finishing syllabuses

11aiv : More work to record CSEN individual progress

12 : Effect on mainstream children

12A : Academic achievement

12Ai : Not affected

Reasons

12Aia : Normal teaching process as usual

12Aib : Mainstream children are intellectually able

12Aic : Mainstream children will work harder

12id : Mainstream children learned better when helping CSEN

12Aii : Undecided

Reasons

12Aiiia : If IE involves phase 1 only

12Aiiib : If RMCTs give more than the usual attention to CSEN

12Aiiic : If RMCTs not able to apportion teaching time equally

12Aiiid : If CSEN have serious problems

12iii : Negatively affected

Reasons

12Aiiia: RMCTs' attention to CSEN will neglect mainstream children

12B : Caring feeling and acceptance of CSEN

12Bi : Increased

Reasons

12Bia : Interaction will familiarise mainstream children with CSEN

12Bii : Undecided

12Biaa : Some will and some won't

12Biib : If RMCTs play their part

12Biii : Will not increase

Reasons

13 : Affect UPSR result 13a: No

13ai : CSEN result separated

13aii : Mainstream children intellectually able

Reasons

13b : Undecided

Reasons

13bi : If CSEN sitting UPSR very small relatively

13bii : Depends on CSEN disabilities

13biii : Depends on CSEN intellect

13biv : Depends on RMCT ability to apportion teaching time

13c : Negatively affected

Reasons

13ci : CSEN have low intellect

13cii : CSEN cannot reach the standard required by UPSR

13A : Alternative evaluation of schools

13Ai : Separate result of CSEN

13Aii : Use different criterion in evaluating CSEN's educational achievements

13Aiii : Give credit to school with good IE practice

14 : CSEN favoured for IE

14i : Mental retardation

14ii : Hearing impairment

14iii	: Visual impairment			
14a	: First	Second	Joint second	Third
			Reasons	
14ai	: Can teach children with LD not HI and VI			
14aai	: Intellectually able			
15	: Willingness to support IE			
15a	: Unwilling			
15ai	: Present conditions not conducive			
15aai	: Too demanding to RMCTs			
15aiii	: Not trained in special education			
15aiv	: Difficult to communicate with CSEN			
15av	: Interfere with normal teaching and learning			
15b	: Undecided			
			Reason	
15bi	: Some will, some won't			
15bii	: If RMCTs are well informed about IE			
15biii	: If IE involve phase I only			
15biv	: Depends on headteachers' support			
15vi	: If majority of teachers support IE			
15c	: Willing			
			Reasons	
15ci	: Humanitarian			
15cii	: RMCTs have been co-operative with SEN programme in the past			
			Reasons	
16 and 20	: Conditions for accepting IE			
A	: Directed by the Ministry			
B	: CSEN have acquired prerequisite skills			
C	: CSEN have no behavioural problems			

- D : Won't accept even if CSEN have no behavioural problems
- E : For non-academic subjects only
- F : Monetary reward given
- G : IE part of teacher' yearly appraisal
- H : Sent for overseas trips
- I : Chance for further studies
- J : Provide resourcing
- K : Support from SETs
- L : Support from headteachers
- M : Support from other teachers
- N : Reduce class size
- O : Limit the of CSEN per class
- P : IE limit to low achieving class
- Q : Reduce RMCTs' teaching period
- R : Reduce RMCTs' non-teaching periods
- S : Only one type of CSEN included in a class
- T : Show IE works
- U : Involve all excellent teachers

18: Barriers to IE

- A : Lack of information on IE
- B : Schools two sessions
- C : Schools streaming
- D : High class size
- E : Responsibility not involved in teaching
- F : RMCTs not trained in special education
- G : RMCTs can teach children with LD
- H : Examination pressure
- I : Negative perceptions of headteachers
- J : Negative acceptance of RMCTs
- K : Negative acceptance of mainstream children
- L : Negative acceptance of mainstream children parents
- M : Professional interest of SETs
- N : Lack of classrooms
- O : Lack of resources
- P : Lack of SETs
- Q : Children with LD behaviours
- R : CSEN low intellectual ability
- S : Negative acceptance of IE by CSEN

19: Changes to support IE

- A : RMCTs trained in special education
- B : IE made part of teacher trainee syllabus
- C : More information on IE to school communities
- D : Build more classrooms
- E : Create post of assistant teacher
- F : Have one session schooling
- G : Lengthen subject periods
- H : Establish or re-establish remedial education classes
- I : Have special education officer in every District Education Offices
- J : Continuous monitoring
- K : Special education officers have special education background

Appendix 13

Translated quotations of the interviews

9.1. The education of children with SEN in Melaka primary schools

9.2. The placement of children with LD

a. School with SEC (LD) that had tried placement

Headteacher,

"In 1995 and 1996, the school decided after consultation with our SET to place several of the school children with LD into mainstream classes. Only children identified by the SET as being able to cope with primary I subjects were selected for placement. Thus the criterion for selecting these children was intellectual abilities rather than age."

Special education co-ordinator,

"What we did was to place selected children with LD for certain subject/s in primary 1. For example for mathematics, child A and 8 were placed in primary I A. for Bahasa Malaysia the same children would be placed in primary IB, music they would be placed in primary IC. Thus primary I RMCT would be having children with LD for specific subject only."

Headteacher,

"For two years these children were placed in primary I mainstream classes. It was not possible to subsequently place them into primary 2 and 3 because these classes only begin schooling in the afternoon. It was not possible to shift primary 2 and 3 to the morning session because that's the way the schooling system is structured in the state. Since these same children with LD had been placed in primary I for roughly two years, they begin to get restless and we believed bored with learning the same topics repeatedly. Boredom coupled with their mental problems resulted in these children being overactive in the class, not able to focus on the lessons being taught, and a becoming a distraction to other mainstream children in the classes. Realising these children's educational interest could be served better in SEC.. The school discontinued the programme in 1997. Now these children are being taught primary 2 syllabuses by SET in SEC."

b. Schools with SEC (LD)

RMCT (senior assistant 1),

"I did discuss with the school special education co-ordinator on the possibility of one of our children with LD being placed into mainstream classes. It was the opinion of the school SEC that this particular boy could be placed into primary 4 class. We consulted his parents and they agreed. But the boy himself re/used to be placed. My reason was that since he had been in SEC for last three years he was so used to his friends in the class as well as the SET. You can say he is very

comfortable where he is now. We are still working on trying to place him but at the moment we are putting the plan on hold."

Special education co-ordinator.

"He said there are too many children in the mainstream class, and he could not cope with the varied behaviours of mainstream children."

Special education co-ordinator,

"Several children in our SEC we feel are ready for primary 2 and 3 learning, but because our SEC are in the morning and these classes are in the afternoon we cannot even begin to place them into mainstream classes. Parents of these children are reluctant to send their child to the afternoon session. Also there is no SET in the afternoon. Therefore any placement would have to be in primary 1, 4, 5 or 6."

c. The placement of children with VI

Headteacher,

"The school is currently placing two of our children with moderate VI in mainstream classes. One is in primary 5 and the other is in primary 6. At the moment not all children with visual impairment are being placed in mainstream classes."

d. Children with SEN in ordinary mainstream primary schools

Headteacher,

"We have a child in this school who we considered as having moderate LD. He does not pose much of a problems behaviourally even though sometimes he is hyperactive in the class. His main problem is his inability to acquire even the basic skills in literacy and numeracy."

The school treats this child just like any other children in the school, and at times more special. We used to stop this child from being automatically promoted into primary 2 and 3 because of his inability to show progress academically. He was retained in primary 1 for three years."

This year (1977) we promoted him straight into primary 4. Academically, he still cannot acquire the basic skills in literacy and numeracy. We feel we cannot continuously retain him in primary 1."

We are toying with the idea of putting him into special education classes in nearby mainstream school which had recently opened SEC for children with LD. Maybe the SET in that school could help him with his educational difficulties which for the last three years our teachers have failed miserably to overcome. But we haven't made any decision on it yet."

9.2. Cognitive Component of attitude

9.2.1. Primary teachers' concept of children with SEN

RET,

"Children with VI and HI impairment, children with LD and also remedial education children."

JPN officer,-

"There is currently a move to include children with remedial educational needs as part of children with special needs. The State Education Department and the schools feel they should, but we are still awaiting the decision of the Education Ministry."

RMCT in school with SEC (LD) had tried placement,

"Children with learning problems in some specific areas but not necessarily handicap. Maybe socially they are ok, but academically they have lots of problems. Some of these children have problems both academically and socially."

SET (HI),

"Children who need specialised teaching or resources made available to them because the present mainstream resources available in schools are not adequate to support their educational needs."

9.2.2. RMCT perceived knowledge of the Education Ministry special education programme

SEC (LD) had tried placement,

"There were circulars from the State Education Department when the school was requested by the Department to set up classes for children with LD. After that there was none."

Headteacher in SEC (LD) had tried placement,

"When I was posted to this school, its SEC (LD) was already established. Ever since I arrived I have never received any circulars from the State Education Department or other relevant educational authorities concerning children with disabilities."

RMCT(VI),

"I had briefly seen the documents before, but it was some time ago. I can't even remember what was in it now."

RMCT(LD),

"I am not sure the school has any circulars concerning the school special education programme. It was never discussed before. Maybe because I am not a special education teacher."

Headteacher (VI) said,

"Since being in this school there are circulars on special education but it was meant for SET. As for regular class teachers, I can't recall any."

SET(LD) had tried placement,

"The problem is RMCTs are not interested in reading something they feel doesn't concern them or is not in their field of teaching. But if they are interested these documents could be found in school files at the office."

9.2.3 RMCT perceived knowledge on the school's children with SEN

a. Children with LD

Head teacher with SEC (LD) had tried placement,

"During my informal discussions with teachers in this school, the majority of teachers rarely used children with LD as the topics of our discussions in their enquiries. Only a small minority of teachers frequently discuss the welfare of children with LD with me. They are either the school SET or RMCT involved with the school inclusive programme last (1996)."

SET(LD),

"There are RMCTs who know my class children and there are also those who don't. Those who regularly visit our class during their free times are aware of the existence of our children, and usually are sensitive towards these children's welfare. If anything happens to our children they will either help them or inform us about it. RMCT who are not interested only know these children from afar."

RMCT (LD) had tried placement,

"Not personally. But I did observe their idiosyncracies from a far. These children are difficult to control. For example there are 6 of these children per teacher in SEC, and yet the SET has all sorts of difficulties trying to teach them."

RMCT(LD),

"SEC in this school was only opened this year (1997), and I have not had a chance to actually get to know these children. I had only seen them in the school compounds."

RMCT (LD) had tried placement,

"Not all. Only those who were placed in my class. Based on my experience, these children can learn but they need a lot of attention. They are very slow in grasping mathematical concepts I taught. When I give them exercise work, they will test me first, to see whether they can get with not doing it. If they see that I am serious they will do their work."

RMCT {LD),

"I regularly visit the school SEC, just to talk to the SET, and say hello to the class children with LD. I don't know deeply their learning problems, but I do know that

they are lower in achievement compared to children with remedial educational needs. Besides being slow in learning these children experience some kind of behavioural problems as well."

b. Children with VI

RMCT (VI),

"They don't know these children personally. Only at a distance They don't understand the world of special education and therefore are uninterested in these children's affairs."

"Maybe they know more about the two children with moderate VI that are currently being included in mainstream classes. But they are not concerned about our children in SEC. As far as I can recall no regular class teachers had ever been to this class asking about our children."

RMCT (VI),

"Sorry. I don't really know these children personally. I seldom visit the school SEC."

"I know these children quite well even though I had been posted to this school for a month. This is because I am given the responsibilities to oversee their everyday needs and welfare."

c. Special education school (HI)

SET (HI),

"They just see these children from the other side of the fence. I don't think our neighbouring RMCTs know our children with HI. Maybe because they are not interested. All they know is that these children's means of communication is by using sign language."

9.2.4. Primary teachers' understandings of the term IE

RMCT(LD),

"I am not sure about this IE. We RMCTs were not given much information about this programme."

Headteachers from ordinary school,

"I am not sure what the concept of IE is all about. I seldom used it"

RET,

"The placement of children with disabilities into mainstream classes fully or part-time"

SET (HI),

"IE is the placement of children with HI into mainstream classes to be educated alongside mainstream children by the same teachers."

SEC (LD),

"To me IE is the placement of children with disabilities into mainstream classes for subjects in which they can cope intellectually, either with mainstream peers of their own age or younger."

RMCT (ID) had tried placement,

"IE is the placement of children with disabilities in this school into mainstream classes for certain subject/s or for all subjects. Last year several were included in my class for art lessons."

9.2.5. Knowledge of the Education Ministry intention to include children with SEN in mainstream classes.

9.2.5.1. Official documents on IE by the State Education Department

SET (LD),

"The Education Ministry wants to introduce IE but until now we the teachers in this school had not been informed either verbally or in writing of what is expected of us in relation to the programme. I think it is about time someone from the State Education Department came to the school and explained to us teachers what is going on."

RMCT (VI),

"A few days ago the school distributed questionnaires asking teachers' opinions on the inclusion of children with disabilities into mainstream classes. That's the first time I have read about it."

9.2.5.2. School's discussions on IE

a. School with SEC (LD) that had tried placement

SEC (LD),

"When we planned to place children with LD into mainstream classes in 1995 and 1996, we and the head teacher invited RMCTs who agreed to have these children in their classes for discussions on how the programme should be implemented. RMCTs who were not involved in the placement programme did not take part in the discussions."

RMCT (LD) involved in IE programme,

"There were discussions between several of us with the head teacher and SET on the placement of children with LD into our classes formally and informally. We were involved in the programme."

RMCT (LD) not involved in IE programme,

"I never asked the head teacher or SEC and they never tell me about it."

b. Schools with SEC (LD)

SET (LD),

"I had a policy of open-class. I invited RMCTs to come over to my class whenever they feel like dropping in. When they come over I try to tell them about the children in my class. I find this more effective because they can see the children for themselves, and when they see these children they tend to ask questions about them."

RMCT (LD),

"I was told by SET that they intend to include these children into mainstream classes when they are ready. They told me when their intellectual ability is on par with mainstream children. But they never mentioned in which year of primary schooling they intend to include these children."

"It never occurs to me to discuss the topic with either the head teacher or SET."

c. School with SEC (VI)

Headteacher said,

"The discussions were done informally between me, SET and RMCT involved in the teaching of the two children with moderate VI included in mainstream classes. There were no such discussions with RMCTs not involved in the education of these two children."

SET (VI),

"I had talks with several RMCTs on its possibilities (inclusion), but none of them were interested. After that I just keep quiet."

RMCT (VI),

"Never discussed it before. Maybe the school does not have a plan to include children with LD into my class."

d. Ordinary mainstream schools

Headteacher,

"We had never discussed the possible placement of children with disabilities into this school. But we did discuss on few occasions about a SEC for children with LD established recently in one mainstream school nearby. Our discussions were on how to register one of our schoolchildren whom we considered as having mental disabilities into this SEC. This is the opposite to what we are discussing now."

RET,

"We don't have SEC in this school, so we don't discussed it."

RMCT,

"What do we need to discuss it for?"

e. Special education school (HI)

SET (HI),

"I did discuss the possibility of our children with HI being included in mainstream classes with several RMCTs. They told me if these children are included, they would still teach like they normally do. They said they should be accused of not doing their job properly if these children do not do well in their classes"

SEC (HI),

"Maybe the schools fences make it difficult for me to talk informally with our neighbouring RMCTs about special education and IE."

9.2.6. RMCTs' perceived rationale of the Education [Ministry plan to implement IE.

Headteacher(VI),

"Teachers are not given much information on IE by the relevant authorities. We the school's administrators seldom discussed with RMCTs about it."

SEC (LD) had tried placement,

"IE if properly implemented could have a positive effect on the education of those with disabilities. Sadly as far as I can remember no one on behalf of the State Education Department has come to this school to explain to our teachers the rationale and the importance of its implementation and so on. You can't expect teachers to simply accept something which they don't understand or implement a new concept of education that they know very little about. Presently IE is being planned by the top administration of the Education Ministry, but we the teachers in the schools have no clue to what it is all about or what is expected of us with reference to the programme."

SEC (VI),

"As far as I know, as long as RMCTs are not involved in the education of children with VI, and they don't have any relatives who are disabled, they won't make any effort to find out about these children's education. Never mind IE"

SEC (HI),

"I don't think they (RMCTs) know. When I was teaching in ordinary school the education of children with HI never crossed my mind. What's more, IE."

RET,

"There were no circulars sent to the school as far as I know on this IE programme. Therefore / can only assume that RMCTs in this school do not know much about the Ministry reasons for wanting to introduce IE."

RMCT (VI),

"Children with disabilities have very low opinions of themselves. By including them in mainstream classes, maybe the Education Ministry hope they would feel less inferior, and not be embarrassed about their handicaps. It could be that they could learn much better when mixed with mainstream children."

RMCT(LD),

"They have to learn to live within mainstream society eventually. So they might as well learn to mix with mainstream children now."

RMCT (LD) had tried placement,

"As can be seen from the current situation in this school, when we have separate classes for children with LD and mainstream children, there exist differences between these children in many aspects. The caring feeling between these two sets of children doesn't seem to exist. They seem separated and distant. Mainstream children tend to laugh at children with LD whenever they pass them in the school. When these children fall, there are mainstream children who wouldn't lift a finger to help them."

RMCT(LD),

"Maybe the Ministry do not want to separate these children educationally because in SEC they will mix with their own kind which could retard their educational development. When included in mainstream classes their intellect could perhaps develop better because they are mixing with children with higher intellectual ability."

RMCT in ordinary mainstream school,

"To save the cost of building new schools or institutions for children with disabilities or to save expenses of establishing new SECs in mainstream schools."

RMCT(LD),

"The Education Ministry wants these children to receive the same types of education as other mainstream children, so that these children will feel that they too can learn like other mainstream children."

RMCT from ordinary school said,

"Maybe at the moment there is a lack of special education institutions or classes for children with disabilities. Maybe so that these children can attend school nearest to their home with their brothers and sisters."

9.2.7. Perceived ability of RMCTs to teach children with SEN

a. School with SEC (LD) that had tried placement.

Headteacher,

"I think RMCTs are able to teach children with LD included in their classes. Even though these children's chronological age is higher, their intellectual capacity is at par with the other children in the classes. Therefore all RMCTs have to do is teach these children like any other children in the class."

SET (LD),

"I was persuaded to teach these children by the former head teacher, and I had no training in special education or experiences in teaching these children prior to that. I had to learn from scratch on how to teach these children. I used my previous experience of having taught primary children to adapt myself to the new situation. I think I have been quite successful, but if you are trained in special education, that's even better."

RMCT (LD) had experience placement (music),

"I think I can, but it would be better if I had the proper training."

RMCT (LD),

"I am not sure I can teach these children because I have no patience to teach the same thing six or seven times over, and still being unsure if they understand what I am trying to teach them."

RMCT (LD) had tried placement,

"I don't think I have the skills to teach these children because when children with LD were included in my class for mathematics lessons, I just couldn't make them understand the mathematics concept I was trying to teach. With mainstream children you can just use your fingers to show one plus one. But with these children you have to use so many other materials just to make them understand this. They also have difficulty in concentrating on their learning. Most of the time they like to play."

b. Schools with SEC (LD)

SET(LD),

"There are teachers teaching in SECs who never had any training in special education. With guidance they have managed to learn to teach these children quite well. If we have to rely on teachers with training in special education only to teach children with LD, then we won't have enough teachers to teach in SECs. I guess any RMCT can teach our children with LD. The requirements are interest, commitments and a little help from experienced SETs."

"Every teacher can teach because that's what teachers do. But how effective is the teaching? Teaching mainstream children and children with LD are not

exactly the same. I am not convinced that RMCTs can teach children with LD effectively because of their inexperience with these children."

RMCT(LD),

"I think I can because I used to teach children with remedial education needs before. These children with LD are just a step lower than these remedial children."

RMCT(LD),

"I have never attended in-service training in special education or remedial education. I also have no experience teaching these children with LD. No, I can't teach them."

c. School with SEC (VI)

SET (VI),

"There are only two officially trained SETs for children with VI in this school. The rest of us had never attended in-service training. If we can do it, why shouldn't other RMCTs be able to do it as well? The only problem is that they have to learn to read and type in Braille, which would take a bit of time to learn but can be learned with perseverance."

SET (VI) with in-service training,

"RMCTs in general do not have the skills to teach children with VI. Even though the learning and teaching processes are the same as teaching mainstream children, they still have to be efficient in Braille, which they are not. These children need to be taught mobility orientation skills for freedom of movement at least in the school compound, and RMCTs are not able to undertake this as well."

RMCT (VI),

"I don't have the ability to read and type in Braille."

"I think I can if given a little bit of training in Braille because many of the teachers teaching in SEC now had never attended in-service in special education."

d. Ordinary mainstream schools

Head teacher,

"If these children are VI or HI my teachers don't have the skills to teach them. If they are LD I think RMCT can use remedial education techniques to teach them."

RET,

"They are not trained. But they might have the skills to teach these children. But even the educational needs of remedial children they are not able to overcome, much less children with disabilities under the Education Ministry special education programme."

RMCT,

"We have one child in this school who teachers regarded as a child with mental disabilities. We try to teach him as best we can but until now he still could not read or write. The teachers in this school have no idea how to help him with his problems. When we teach we try to help help him as much as possible but so far we are unsuccessful. Maybe there are other ways to make him learn, but none of us have any training in special education."

e. Special education school (HI)

SET (HI),

"RMCTs are not trained in sign language communication. It will take some time for these teachers to acquire mastery in the use of sign language."

"I was requested to teach in this school because the school needs teachers. I agreed voluntarily to teach here. When I first arrived I just didn't know how to start to teach these children, because my teaching experience had always been with mainstream children. For days I had sleepless nights. With the head teacher's encouragement and the help of other SETs, I slowly began to communicate with the children using sign language. Now I feel confident in my teaching. Thus if I can do it, I am sure other RMCTs can do it too."

9.3. Affective component of attitudes

9.3.1. Perceived rights of children with SEN to IE

a. School with SEC (LD) that had tried placement

SET(LD),

"For some children with LD, yes, for others, no, because the types of teaching used in mainstream classes are not suitable for some of these children who are not ready for inclusion. The rate of learning and the over-emphasis on academic achievements make it difficult for the majority of our children with LD to cope with mainstream learning."

RMCT (LD) had experienced placement (music),

"It will help them learn about how to mix with the outside community."

RMCT(LD),

"Maybe for part of the day and for certain subject/s only. Also for those children with LD who SETs feel are ready to be included."

"If we give them the right to inclusion they would not get their full right in education. In SECs they will have that extra special education which they are entitled to and the extra funding which is allocated to SECs by the Education Ministry."

b. Schools with SEC(LD)

SET (LD),

"Our education philosophy clearly stated that 'Education is for All', and the national special education philosophy states that 'Children with special needs should be given the opportunities to maximise their education potential '. So I don't see why they should be denied their rights to be included in mainstream classes if it could maximise their learning potential."

SET(LD),

"Only those considered as 'high-functioning' and can cope in mainstream classes, but not those children with severe learning disabilities or/and have behavioural problems."

RMCT(LD),

"They have the right to mix with mainstream children to prevent them from being isolated and demoralised within the school's community."

"I think they have the right for non-academic subjects. For academic subjects they also have the right if they could cope with the pace in which these academic subjects are being taught in mainstream classes."

c. School with SEC (VI)

SET (VI),

"They are also human. If we don't train them at a very early age on how to get along in society, they would be left out on many opportunities to make themselves useful and most important of all be self-dependent. We don't want these children to be mixing with blind people only, once they leave school."

"Children with moderate VI may have the right to inclusion because they are able to cope with mainstream learning. For those with total VI, they have the right to specialised teaching."

HMCT (VI),

"For those children who have mastered the use of Braille, maybe when they are included they can Braille their own notes instead of just listening only. But the problem now is that many of these children with VI can't even use the Braille properly. They need guidance on how to use it. We don't know how to help them."

RMCT (VI),

"They have the right, but at the same time children with VI also have the right to specialised resources to enable them to access mainstream classrooms learning. For example, children with VI should be given Braille facilities and other appropriate teaming materials. The same privileges should also be extended to children with HI and LD."

d. Ordinary mainstream schools

Headteacher,

“If there are ways in which children with disabilities can be helped with mainstream classroom learning, than they should be included in order for them to become part of mainstream community, and for humanitarian reasons.”

RET,

“They have the right especially children with V[and HI because I heard they are following the same syllabuses as mainstream children. As for children with LD, they too have the right to inclusion for subjects they could cope with.”

“It is not just the question of right It is whether these children can cope with mainstream learning. What's the point of granting them their rights to inclusion when the objectives of educating them are unreachable? They need specialised teaching by trained specialist teachers. Grant them their rights to a different educational provision.”

RMCT in ordinary school,

“The child who the teachers in this school regarded as having mental disabilities is studying in mainstream class because we don 't have special education classes for children with LD in this school. He is only given remedial education in literacy and numeracy, but so far he still could not read or write. Maybe if he is taught in SEC for children with LD in neighbouring school, he could achieve better.”

d. Special education school (HI)

SET (HI),

“They have the right but would only be suitable for non-academic subject. Inclusion in non-academic subjects would permit children with HI to actively interact with mainstream children and thus learn how to accommodate themselves to mainstream society.”

9.3.2. Perceived benefit of IE to children with SEN

9.3.2.1. Children with SEN academic achievements

a. School with SEC (LD) that had tried placement

SET (LD),

“Academically, some children with LD included in mainstream classes showed improvement and some didn't. For some children with LD it is better to teach them fully in SECs until they are ready academically to be included in whatever level of primary education is appropriate.”

RMCT (LD),

“In SECs maybe the other children in the classes are worse than him/her academically. In mainstream classes his/her neighbour could help him/her in

his/her lessons. Even if these children with LD just copied what his/her mainstream friends do, eventually they would learn something. Also he/she could learn to concentrate on their work when they see other children busy doing their work."

"There could be two side effects. If RMCTs could provide for these children all the attention they require then maybe their academic achievement will improve. But if RMCTs are too occupied and busy with mainstream children and can only give minimal individual guidance to these children, then their academic progress will decline."

RMCT (LD) had experienced placement,

i. mathematics,

"There were two children with LD included in my class. There was, I felt, an improvement in one, but a decline in the other. The learning environment might have been conducive to one but not the other."

ii. also mathematics,

"The children included in my class could not follow my lessons in mathematics. I am embarrassed to admit it. I think their performance in mathematics declined rather than improved."

b. Schools with SEC (LD)

SET(LD),

"From my experience with children with LD who regularly interact with mainstream children during break times and before/after schooling, their ability to communicate has improved. Their vocabularies have increased. If inclusion is being practiced, my assumption is that there will be an improvement in their academic achievements."

"Maybe for some children with LD"

"RMCTs don't have time for children with LD in their class. They don't even have time for the low achievers in their class, much less children with LD."

RMCT(LD),

"They can always learn from mainstream children who are usually better academically than them."

"From my experience, remedial education children when they are in remedial education class are very talkative. They are active in discussions with teachers and in their involvement in the lessons. But when they return to my mainstream class, they are quiet and timid. Based on this, maybe, it is better academically if these children are taught in SECs."

c. School with SEC (VI)

SET (VI),

"There are children with VI in SEC who have intellectual ability equal to if not better than the majority of mainstream children. Their academic achievement will surely increase."

"If children with VI have normal intellectual ability they will be able to compete with mainstream children, and their academic performance should be better in mainstream classes. But lately children with VI sent to this school besides having VI are also suffering from other disabilities, like mental and physical disabilities. Those who also suffer from mental disabilities, even though not very severe, will not achieve much in terms of academic performance if included in mainstream classes."

"Their academic achievement would be better in SECs. These children would have problems taking lesson notes in mainstream classes because RMCTs will be teaching according to their normal pace. If the children cannot translate certain concepts into Braille, RMCT would not be able to help them."

RMCT (VI),

"For some children with VI yes, for others no."

"Their academic achievements could worsen because teachers will always concentrate on teaching the majority and would give token service to the minority of children with VI."

d. Ordinary mainstream schools

Headteacher,

"My experience was only with a child with mental disabilities (assumed by the school concerned) but I think it would depend on the types of disabilities the child has. For children with LD, it is very difficult to improve their academic performance in mainstream classes."

RET,

"If the children are LD or HI, they are slower in their academic development compared to children with VI, but there will be an improvement."

"Among themselves, they will feel they are lagging too far behind compared to other children in the class. Thus they would be encouraged to try harder to catch up with each other. In mainstream classes they could simply give up because they could not keep up with mainstream children's progress. But if these children with disabilities can be persuaded to do their best irrespective of other children's achievements, and they can comfortably learn side by side with other mainstream children, then their academic achievement could better improve in mainstream classes compared to SECs."

"Based on my experience of teaching remedial children, I found that for academic subjects, they achieve better in my remedial class compared to when they were in mainstream class. Maybe because I can give them the individual attention they need, which RMCTs can't give them. So maybe it is better for children with SEN to be in SECs for academic learning."

RMCT from ordinary school,

"When mixed together with mainstream children their thinking could be further developed compared to when they are being educated together with their own kind. They can always learn from mainstream children."

"I don't really know because I have not taught children with disabilities." "SETs are better trained to teach these children. They know what is required because they have been specially trained for the task. We RMCTs will teach them like other children, which might not be suitable. Maybe it is better academically if the child with mental disabilities in the school (assumed by the school) is taught by specialist teachers in special education."

e. Special education school (HI)

SET (HI),

"Their academic achievement would not progress rapidly because RMCTs would have difficulties in trying to make children with HI understand the lesson being taught due to unfamiliarity with sign language. In SECs, teachers not only have the ability to communicate with these children, they can also give more individual attention to them because the number of children in these SECs at the most are 10."

9.3.2.2. Children with SEN social development

a. School with SEC (LD) that had tried placement

SET (LD),

"Socially, the placement of children with LD was a success. These children were able to make friends with mainstream children, even though there are still those who tease these children with LD by calling them names."

RMCT (LD),

"Their social skills will develop because they will interact and socialise regularly with mainstream children, thus ensuring that they behave in a socially acceptable manner."

"Children nowadays are very choosy who their friends are. If they are uncomfortable with children with LD in the class, they will just ignore them. If this happens, then children with LD would learn how not to accept people rather than the opposite. If mainstream children are accepting towards them, then their social skills will improve."

b. Schools with SEC (LD)

SET (LD),

"It will depend on the RMCT in the class."

RMCT (LD),

"If just among themselves, maybe there will not be much change in the social skills development of children with LD. But if included in mainstream classes it will make great improvements. They will tend to imitate mainstream peer behaviours, which hopefully are those that are socially acceptable."

c. School with SEC (VI)

SET (VI),

"When children with VI are exposed to mainstream children, and these children are willing to help them in whatever way they can, in both academic and non-academic fields, then children with VI will not be conscious of their disabilities and would be at ease mixing with mainstream society."

RMCT (VI),

"If the intention of inclusion is just to develop these children's social skills, then yes, inclusion will enhance it."

"Hopefully RMCTs will encourage these children with VI to learn to accept the other children in the class. If not, then these children with VI would remain rooted in their seat."

d. Ordinary mainstream schools

Headteacher,

"The only way we can help our child who we think has mental disabilities is to improve his social skills. We can try to make him independent in managing himself, conscious of the communities around him, and know how to conduct himself when interacting with other people."

RET,

"Only if teachers can persuade mainstream children to acts as 'role models' for children with disabilities."

RMCT from ordinary mainstream schools,

"The child regarded as having mental disabilities in the school gets along superbly with the other children. Socially he is just like any other child in the school."

"Maybe it will improve their social skills. But I can't say for sure because the school doesn't have children with disabilities under the Education Ministry special education programme."

e. Special education school (HI)

SET (HI),

"They will be able to develop their social skills. Recently we had camping outings with mainstream children. They (children with HI) seem to get along fine with mainstream children even though they have lots of difficulty understanding each other."

9.3.2.3 Children with SEN emotional development

a. School with SEC (LD) that had tried placement

SET (LD),

"Children with LD would not feel isolated and segregated from mainstream learning if they are able to mix with mainstream children for certain subjects in mainstream classes. But for children who are older and more mature, they do feel embarrassed when called 'handicapped child' by mainstream children. Also children with LD would be made scapegoats for any wrong doing in the class. When we included children with LD in mainstream classes, if there was something improper happening in mainstream classes, like rubbish being thrown on the floor, children with LD would be accused, even though the culprits are mainstream children themselves."

RMCT (LD),

"Including children with LD in mainstream classes would make them feel accepted."

"If children with LD are included in class A (high achieving class) their confidence would nosedive, but if included in class F (lowest achieving class) they might feel they are as able as the other children in the classes."

"Nowadays mainstream children have terrible discipline and there are those who would like to bully children with LD in their class. Emotionally this could be bad for children with LD."

b. Schools with SEC (LD)

SET(LD),

"Children with LD would feel embarrassed and isolated if included in mainstream classes."

"For my special education classes I nominated six of the class children with LD as prefects to take care of the other children in SEC. They have the responsibilities to assist their friends in SEC during schools recess. This hopefully will make our children with LD feel independent and useful. So far they have done a good job in undertaking the roles expected of them."

We also noticed that mainstream children showed tremendous respect to our prefects even though these children realised that these prefects are from SEC. For example when our prefects reprimand mainstream children for littering, these mainstream children would pick up the litter that they had just thrown down and place it in the bin. This in a way helps to boost the self-esteem of children with LD. But it takes time and a lot of patience on our part to reach this stage of development. If this can be achieved in segregated settings, it could also be achieved if children with LD are included in mainstream classes."

c. School with SEC (VI)

"Emotionally they would be demoralised because other children can see and they can't."

RMCT (VI),

"Children with VI would be victimised by mainstream children."

"Some children with VI would be happy in mainstream classes and some who could not cope will suffer emotionally."

d. Ordinary mainstream schools

RET,

"Maybe initially children with disabilities would feel humble, embarrassed and at times isolated when included in mainstream classes. Once they feel they are being accepted by both mainstream children and RMCTs they will have confidence in themselves and will like mainstream children better."

Headteacher,

"From my experience with one of our school children (assumed to be mentally disabled) when he was in phase 1 primary schooling, he did not indicate any serious inferiority complex. Maybe during this period he was not aware he was different intellectually. But now in phase 2, I think he has begun to realise that he is different. He tends to isolate himself and only mix with children in his class during free time."

RMCT of ordinary schools,

"Emotionally children with disabilities would have more confidence in themselves because of their ability to mix and learn together with mainstream children."

"When other children can, and they can't, they would be demoralised."

9.3.3. Perceived suitability of the National New Primary Schools' Curriculum (KBSR) for the education of children with SEN

a. School with SEC (LD) that had tried placement

Headteacher.

"Only the emphasis on the acquisition of basic literacy and numeracy skills in phase 1 primary syllabus is suitable for our children with LD. If one expects these children to produce elaborate compositions, then I think it is a bit too ambitious and beyond these children's capabilities."

SET(LD),

"The present KBSR curriculum is suitable for our children with LD. All it needs are some modifications in order to make it accessible to these children."

RMCT (LD) had experienced placement,

i. mathematics,

"For primary I mathematics curriculum that I used to teach these children with LD, some of its copies are suitable and some are not. What amazed me was that they were able to answer some maths questions which I considered hard, and at times not able to solve the questions I regarded as easy."

ii. also mathematics,

"Subjects which require high intellectual abilities are not suitable for these children with LD. Subjects that require the use of physical skills like non-academic subjects are o.k. for these children. For example in weaving, these children's handiwork is much better than that produced by my mainstream children."

RMCT(LD),

"The present KBSR syllabus demands high intellectual ability; which these children with LD might not be capable of."

RMCT(LD),

"Nowadays children are required to learn too many subjects. As it is, even mainstream children have problems coping with it, and especially children with LD in this school.."

b. School with SEC (LD)

SET(LD),

"For non-academic subjects it is suitable. But for academic subjects like Bahasa Malaysia (Malay Language) or mathematics, it is a bit difficult for children with LD. These children are very slow in their learning. This makes it difficult to teach these subjects to them at a high level of primary education."

RMCT (LD),

"It is too advanced for children with LD in this school. From my discussions with SETs these children's main priorities are learning self-help skills so that they can be independent in personal self-management."

c. School with SEC (VI)

Headteacher,

"KBSR is suitable for children with VI with normal intellectual ability. What is needed is for all the learning materials to be transformed into Braille, and pictures into shapes that can be distinguished using touch senses. But there are also children with VI who are mentally disabled. For these children primary phase 1 is suitable, but not primary phase 2 syllabuses."

SET (VI),

"It is suitable, but in certain subjects like science, especially those that involve observing an experiment, we have to verbalise what actually happens. It might be difficult at first for them to grasp the concept but with frequent listening they will eventually get the idea."

"There are those that are suitable and there are those that are unsuitable. For example, a subject requiring high powers of observation, they would have difficulty in accessing it."

d. Ordinary mainstream schools

RET,

"For children with LD, it is a bit high because even for my remedial children they have problems in trying to master the literacy and numeracy skills required in phase 1 primary. But for non-academic subjects like art, music and physical education, that should be o.k. As for children with VI and HI it should be o.k."

RMCT from ordinary school,

"The current KBSR syllabus involving academic subjects is too difficult for our occasional children with mental disability (assumed by the school) in our school. Sure for children with VI and HI maybe it is suitable with modifications."

e. Special education school (HI)

SET (HI),

"We feel the academic section of KBSR syllabus is too demanding for our children with HI, but we have no choice because we must subscribe to the directives of the Education Ministry to teach according to this syllabus."

9.3.4. Perceived effect of IE on teachers' workload

JPN officer,

"Teachers have to prepare special lessons and exercises for children with disabilities included in their classes. They have to determine what types of work are suitable for these children and ensure their availability during lessons."

Completing the syllabuses would also be slightly affected. Normally in one lesson of 30 minutes with mainstream children, teachers would be able to finish a certain amount of work. But with the inclusion of children with disabilities, they would have to give due attention to these children's needs, thus lessening the amount of work they are able to complete during that one lesson."

a. School with SEC (LD) that had tried placement

Headteacher,

"If teachers were to teach children with LD like any other children in the class, there would not be much increase in their everyday teaching workload. But the official requirement is that the daily educational progress of children with LD needs to be recorded, and this would definitely increase teachers' present workload. Teachers also have to put in extra effort to control and teach children with LD included in their class. They also have to give special attention to these children's educational needs, which might necessitate using different teaching strategies to those usually employed."

RMCT (LD) had experienced placement (mathematics),

"My teaching workload increases because I have to make special effort for these children with LD. I have to employ different strategies to make them understand just one mathematical concept, which also requires the preparation of various teaching materials."

"My ability to finish my syllabuses in time was also affected because I have to slow my teaching progress to accommodate these children with LD. Most of the time I have to proceed to new topics even though these children haven't mastered the concept being taught. I have no choice."

RMCT(LD),

"Presently, teachers are required to prepare three different types of work exercises for three groups of different achievers in the class. With the inclusion of these children with LD there will be a fourth to be done."

b. Schools with SEC (LD)

SET(LD),

"It will increase because they have to fill in the various forms detailing the everyday progress of children in the class with LD, the topics currently taught to them and what the next objectives are for these children."

RMCT(LD),

"These children with LD need special attention from class teachers. For example, if they want to go to the toilet, the class teachers have to escort them, which results in teachers having to leave the class for a short while."

c. School with SEC (VI)

SET (VI),

"RMCTs teach as usual. When children with VI are included in their classes, all these children's work would be sent to SET for transcribing. RMCTs only have to mark the transcripts. There will only be a slight increase."

RMCT (VI),

"I would have to prepare lots of listening teaching materials for these children with VI because I don't know Braille."

d. Ordinary mainstream schools

Headteacher,

"Teachers' burdens would definitely increase. First they would have to give extra attention to the educational needs of these children with disabilities. If the teachers were to teach children with VI, their teaching strategies would have to be different. This inadvertently would increase work in lesson preparation."

RET,

"If the class teachers are expected to prepare all the teaching and learning materials of course there will be an increase in teachers' workload. If class teachers are being supported by teaching assistants in learning and teaching material preparation, then the increase would be acceptable."

RMCT from ordinary school,

"Teachers have to give extra attention to the only child with mental disabilities (assumed by the school concerned) in the school. Often with this child, teachers have to prepare learning materials that are totally different to those we give the other children in the class."

e. Special education schools (HI)

SET (HI),

"As it is teachers are not only expected to teach. They are also required to be involved in co-curriculum activities, clerical work concerning the children in the class, and other extracurricular activities at the district, state and sometimes at the national levels. If children with disabilities are also included in their classes, and the latest requirement is that every child with disabilities must have an individualised education plan, the RMCT would have a heart attack."

9.3.5. Perceived effect of IE to mainstream children

9.3.5.1. Mainstream children academic progress

a. School with SEC (LD) that had tried placement

Headteacher,

"If inclusion of children with LD is done at phase I primary, mainstream children's academic progress would not be affected, but I am not sure if inclusion would affect phase 2 children's academic performance."

RMCT (LD),

"Mainstream children don't have any learning problems. Thus it will not have any affect on their academic achievements."

"Maybe the inclusion of children with LD would spur mainstream children to achieve higher because they wouldn't want these children to do better academically than them."

"If teachers can divide their teaching time appropriately, maybe it would not have an affect on the academic achievements of mainstream children."

RMCT (LD) had tried placement (mathematics),

"It had an affect on mainstream children's academic progress because I had to reallocate my teaching time to overcome the learning difficulties of children with LD. If these children with LD don't understand, I have to put in extra effort to make them understand and this affected my progress in finishing the syllabuses. When I don't finish the syllabuses, mainstream children would not be able to answer some of the questions in the school mid-term and end of the year examinations. Thus their examination results are lower than primary children in the other classes."

b. Schools with SEC (LD)

SET (ID),

"Normal teaching would proceed as usual with or without children with LD in the class."

"Maybe it will negatively affect mainstream children's academic progress slightly if children with LD have some kinds of behavioural problems. Their behaviours in the class could cause distractions to mainstream children's concentration."

RMCT (LD),

"At phase 1 primary it will not have much affect because teachers' priorities at this level of education is to ensure that children master the basic literacy and numeracy skills."

c. School with SEC (VI)

Headteacher,

"Mainstream children's academic achievement would not be negatively affected because teachers would try to finish their syllabuses in time, and that's the problem. Sometimes it is too fast for children with VI to follow."

SET (VI),

"Mainstream children who act as readers (who read to children with VI for Braille purposes) would benefit academically because reading to these children would enhance their knowledge of the subjects read."

"Teachers would spend much more time with children with VI thus depriving other children of their time."

RMCT (VI),

"Mainstream children will be able to learn like they normally do because intellectually they are able. The existence of children with VI in the class would not make any difference."

RMCT (VI)

"Teachers would have to make extra effort to convey to children with VI things they can't see but which are essential to the lesson. This would definitely mean giving more attention to these children, thus denying mainstream children the attention they need."

d. Ordinary mainstream schools

RET,

"When mainstream children help children with disabilities, they increase their understanding of the subject matter or concepts. This would enhance their academic performance rather than diminishing it."

"The more time teachers spend with children with disabilities, the less time they have with mainstream children."

RMCT from ordinary mainstream school.

RMCT(LD).

"If these children with LD have abnormal behaviour and like to disturb mainstream children, then these children would keep their distance from them. If they don't have such awkward behaviours, maybe they could accept them in their class."

b. Schools with SEC (LD)

SET(LD),

"There will always be a section of mainstream children who will use derogatory remarks to describe children with LD included in mainstream classes. But if teachers play their part in preventing this from happening, mainstream children will eventually accept these children with LD."

"Including children with LD will make mainstream children more caring. In the past during any school activities, mainstream children would always give children with LD first priority."

RMCT(LD),

"Including children with LD will help facilitate the creation of a 'caring society', but I am worried a section of our mainstream children would bully these children in mainstream class because to them children with mental disabilities are easy targets."

"Mixing these two groups of children in the same class would help them understand each other more and thus become more caring towards each other's welfare."

“Even though these children with LD and mainstream children are not learning in the same class, we can still encourage the 'caring feeling' among mainstream children. The school frequently arranged activities for our children with LD and in all these activities we involved mainstream children as well. From my everyday observation, mainstream children can get along very well with our children with LD.”

c. School with SEC (VI)

Headteacher,

“It will make mainstream children more caring because from what I can see in the school and at the hostel, mainstream children are always helpful to our children with VI. But there are also mainstream children who are mischievous, and at times would play tricks on these children with VI. Thankfully there are not many of these types of mainstream children in the school.”

SET (VI),

“From my observations, mainstream children are very concerned about children with VI in this school. For example, mainstream children would take turns reading lesson notes so that children with VI can Braille it. When it's time for praying, mainstream children would always come to fetch children with VI from the hostel to take them to the mosque.”

RMCT(VI),

“Some will accept these children with VI, but there are also those who won't. Those who are not accepting would bully these children, thus making them more isolated from the rest of the class.”

“I don't think there will be negative attitude towards children with VI by mainstream children. They seem to have accepted the two children with moderate VI presently in mainstream class.”

d Ordinary mainstream schools

Headteacher,

“There would be mixed acceptance by mainstream children towards children with disabilities. There would be one section of mainstream children who could accept children with disabilities, make friends with them, help them, and realise how lucky they are. But there is also a section of mainstream children who would tease and bully them.”

RMCT (LD),

“Depends on how many children with LD sitting for the UPSR at one time. If two or three and roughly 240 mainstream children, its effect will be negligible.”

"We will try our best to teach these children with LD to their optimum educational potential, but I still think it is not high enough for them to pass the UPSR."

RMCT (LD) had experienced placement (mathematics),

"The children with LD have very poor academic achievements especially in Bahasa Malaysia and mathematics. In UPSR there are very few easy questions. The majority of questions are either hard or moderately hard, which I feel these children would not be able to answer."

b. Schools with SEC (LD)

RMCT (LD),

"Academically they can never achieve the standard required for UPSR. They are LD children, not even remedial education children."

c. School with SEC (VI)

Headteacher,

"In this school we combine UPSR results of both children with VI and mainstream children when calculating our percentage of passes. Last year (1996) it did negatively affect our results because children with VI sitting for UPSR failed it. But the previous year it enhanced our results because children with VI obtained good results. Therefore it depends on the children's intellectual abilities."

SET (VI),

"In the past there were children with VI who did quite well in UPSR. Their academic abilities are equal to that of mainstream children."

"If teachers can give appropriate time to the education of mainstream children and those with VI, maybe it will not negatively effect the school's UPSR performance."

RMCT (VI),

"There will those who will fail and there will also be those who will pass, just like mainstream children."

"Based on past results, the majority of children with VI who took UPSR failed it. Since the school's percentage of passes also included their results, there was a decline in the school performance."

d. Ordinary mainstream schools

Headteacher,

"For the child with mental disabilities (assumed by the school) like the one we have in this school maybe it would have a negative effect. But some children with VI and HI have intellectual abilities equal to that of mainstream children. Their results would increase the percentage of passes."

RET,

"Some children with disabilities are very intelligent and can perform better in UPSR than mainstream children."

"Even with remedial children in the school, UPSR percentages are negatively affected, and all the more if children with disabilities are included."

RMCT from ordinary school.

"There are two possibilities. It could decrease the school's percentage pass rate or it could enhance it. There are children with disabilities who are academically able."

"Children with disabilities due to their handicaps would struggle to achieve the academic level required to pass the UPSR examination. The chance of failing the examination are greater than their chances of passing it."

e. Special education school (HI)

SET (HI),

"It will affect the school performance in U'PSR because up till now in this school no children with HI have ever passed in all subjects examined in UPSR."

9.3.6. Suggestions on alternative methods of evaluating mainstream schools' yearly performance practising IE.

RMCT (LD),

"No doubt children with LD would fail their UPSR. To avoid it affecting a school's position in the State Education Department table, just ignore these children's results when calculating that school's percentage of passes."

SET (LD) had tired placement,

"Evaluate the educational progress of children with LD at the beginning of the year and compare it with what they have achieved at the end of the year. If their progress is satisfactory, then consider them as candidates that have passed. In this way schools would be encouraged to accept these children not only in mainstream classes but most importantly into the schools themselves."

SET (VI),

"The success of children with VI education should not be based solely on their UPSR results. It should also take into account these children's achievements in other fields. For example, their involvement in representing the school in sports and cultural activities at district, state and national level. Children with VI in this school are heavily involved in these activities. This should also be referred to when assessing the educational success of these children, and credit be given to the school for this achievement."

SET (HI),

"The weighting of children with HI in examination should be 30% academic and 70% skills acquisitions."

9.3.7. Types of children with SEN favoured by primary teachers for IE a. School with SEC (LD) that had tried placement

Headteacher,

"The most suitable would be children with LD because I feel RMCTs in this school can teach these children. As for children with VI and HI, my RMCTs do not have Braille and sign language skills."

RMCT (LD),

"I feel children with VI and HI are most suitable because intellectually they are at par with mainstream children, unlike children with LD. They are unlikely to disturb other children in the class."

RMCT (LD),

"All three types of children are unsuitable because each type has its own problems. I am not trained to teach any of these children."

b. Schools with SEC (LD)

RMCT(LD),

"I prefer children with LD because they can hear and see. As for children with HI and VI, I do not have the skills in sign language and Braille. I can live with children with LD because even though they are slow in grasping the concept I am teaching, if persisted with they will eventually learn something by hearing and seeing."

"Based on ability to learn I would prefer children with VI followed by children with HI."

c. School with SEC (VI)

SET (VI),

"Maybe children with LD are the most suitable because they can hear and see like mainstream children, followed by children with VI because they can hear. Third, children with HI, because their inability to hear would make it difficult for them to develop their intellectual potential."

RMCT (VI),

"Children with HI because the usage of sign language does not disturb lessons in the class, but Braille does. The most unsuitable would be children with LD because intellectually they cannot cope with mainstream learning which stresses academic achievement too much."

"Children with VI are more suitable intellectually compared to HI. That's what I feel anyway. As for children with LD, they are not only intellectually disabled, but they could also have behavioural problems which could cause discomfort to other mainstream children."

d. Ordinary mainstream schools

Headteacher,

"Based on current school facilities, the most suitable would be children with LD because teachers in the school do not have Braille and sign language skills."

RET,

"All three types are suitable provided the school has the appropriate facilities."

RMCT from ordinary school,

"I would prefer children with LD because they can hear and see what I am trying to teach them. As for children with HI and VI, I don't have the skills to teach them."

"Intellectually there are children with VI who have succeeded in their educational quest and earned university degrees. I haven't heard of children with HI entering university, but there are those who are now studying in higher secondary education. As for children with LD it will be a great achievement for them if they can acquire skills to help them survive this modern society."

e. Special education school (HI)

SET (HI),

"We have a living proof that children with VI could achieve a high level of academic achievements. There is now one professor at the University of Malaysia who is visually impaired."

9.4. Conative component of attitudes

9.4.1. Perceived RMCT support for IE implementation

a. School with SEC (LD) that had tried placement

Headteacher,

"RMCTs' first reaction would be to reject the inclusion of children with LD in their class and would give excuses to reject it. If the Education Ministry insisted and persevered with the plan, and RMCTs are given all the information associated with the programme, they can be persuaded to accept it. But it will need a lot of persuasion by the relevant education authorities."

SET (LD),

"RMCTs' support would depend on schools' headteachers. If the headteacher continuously stresses the importance of an inclusion programme for the school in their meetings with RMCTs, they might be persuaded to accept it. But if the

headteacher seldom mentions it in his/her meetings with RMCTs, then inclusion would be seen as another unwelcome addition to their teaching responsibilities."

RMCT (LD) had experience placement,

i. mathematics,

"The current conditions in this school do not augur well for the inclusion of children with LD. Neither mainstream nor children with LD will benefit academically."

ii. music,

"For phase 1 primary it should be o.k. but for phase 2 primary I am a bit reluctant because the syllabuses at this level demand high intellectual ability from its candidates. I had tried teaching the children with LD in primary 1 class, and it was manageable for both groups of children and the teacher."

RMCT (ID),

"If other teachers support the programme, I will support it. If I am alone I am not so sure. If there are others who are willing, we can sort of help each other morally and educationally"

"I guess I will support the programme for humanitarian reasons."

b. Schools with SEC(LD)

SET (LD),

"Inclusion would be too demanding on RMCTs."

"Not all RMCTs will support the inclusion of children with LD, but I think they will support the programme if they have a deep understanding of it."

"I think RMCTs will support it because so far they have been supportive towards all our activities regarding children with LD."

RMCT (LD),

"Difficult for me to support the programme implementation because I and the majority of the schools' teachers have not attended any training courses in the teaching of children with LD."

c. Schools with SEC (VI)

Headteacher,

"I think RMCTs will support the programme's implementation because so far they have already accepted two of our children with moderate VI in their classes."

SET (VI),

"Not many RMCTs will support an inclusion programme because they don't have any special education background. Like myself when I was a mainstream teacher,

I didn't know anything about the education of children with VI. I would have been apprehensive of having these children in my class."

RMCT (VI),

"I will not support the programme to include children with VI in mainstream classes whose teachers are not trained in special education. These children will suffer emotionally because the teachers do not have the knowledge to teach them."

"This is a new concept in mainstream primary education. I need to know more about it before I can make up my mind to support or not to support its implementation."

d. Ordinary mainstream schools

Headteacher,

"RMCTs will not support it at present because it demands too much of teachers' capabilities. There are problems with mainstream children that have yet to be overcome, and now with these children with disabilities."

RET,

"Based on the school's current conditions, maybe phase 1 primary teachers will support the inclusion of these children with disabilities because quite a number of them I found in this school are sympathetic toward remedial children's educational problems. As for phase 2 primary teachers, I don't think they will support it because their teaching is geared toward achieving good UPSR results in year 6."

RMCT from ordinary mainstream school,

"We have a child with mental disabilities (assumed by the ordinary school) in our school, and so far all the teachers involved in teaching him for the last four years have not been successful in upgrading his literacy and numeracy skills. Maybe if he is taught by teachers trained in special education he could do better."

"I will support it because if we don't try, we won't know."

e. Special education school (HI)

SET (HI),

"They will not support IE because they know teaching these children with HI would be problematic. Even if only one of these children is included, teachers would still have to prepare teaching materials for that one child."

"Very few will support IE because of their inability to communicate with children with HI, and also it will result in an increase in the teachers' teaching burden."

9.4.2. Perceived willingness of RMCTs to attend in-service training in special education

a. School with SEC (LD) that had tried placement

Headteacher,

"As far as I know RMCTs are only interested to attend in-service courses in special education if they have a child with disabilities. If their children are perfectly normal, they are not interested. To them teaching these children is a waste of time."

SET (LD) said,

"Teachers are not interested in the education of children with LD."

RMCT (LD) had tried placement,

i. mathematics,

"I don't think I will go because firstly I don't have the patience to teach these children. Secondly, the main emphasis in training courses are theories which tend to make things look easy. When you try practising it yourself you realise that it is difficult to implement what has been taught. I don't want to get frustrated in my teaching."

ii. music,

"If given the chance I want to go because we have to learn whatever is recent educationally. Anyway we will often meet children with disabilities in mainstream schools."

RMCT(LD),

"I don't think so because it won't be long before I retire, thus not interested."

"If directed I will go. But I won't volunteer to go. If I volunteer the authorities would have high expectations of me. What if I could not deliver what is expected after attending the course? I should not have gone in the first place because personally I just don't have what it takes to teach these children."

b. Schools with SEC (LD)

SET(LD),

"If RMCTs are given information on inclusion programme beforehand, they might be interested. What makes teachers reluctant to attend special education courses is that they are unsure what they are getting themselves into. If they have a rough idea of what this programme is about, maybe they can be persuaded to attend courses in special education."

RMCT(LD),

"I don't think I will because of my work commitment. Even now I sometimes have to miss teaching my class because I have to attend meetings organized by either the District Education Office and/or the State Education Department."

"I will go so as to increase the range of my teaching abilities to include children with disabilities."

c. School with SEC (VI)

Headteacher,

"Two to three of my RMCTs say they will agree to accept children with VI in their class if they are given the relevant training."

RMCT (VI),

"I am reluctant because, one, the course is too long (1 year), two, the centre of training is too far from home, and three, family commitments."

"I will go because I can learn something different. Previously I learned how to teach mainstream children, and this time I am learning how to teach children with VI."

d. Ordinary mainstream schools

Headteacher,

"In the past teachers in this school were not receptive towards in-service courses in special education. Maybe they are not interested or they have family commitments."

RET,

"There are teachers who would be interested to attend such courses. All that is needed is to give them some information on what educating children with disabilities entails. For example when I opened this remedial class there were many RMCTs who came over to my class to see what remedial education is all about, and they asked a lot of questions about remedial education. That shows that RMCTs are interested in the education of children with learning problems."

"Some RMCTs like to teach bright children only. Very few like to teach low achieving children, and very few still are willing to teach children with disabilities."

"They might be willing but it should only be a short term course. RMCTs have family commitments which also require their attention."

RMCT from ordinary schools.

"When you have been teaching for as long as I have and got so used to the current types of teaching, I guess I have lost interest in changing my ways."

"I will volunteer because in mainstream classes there are also children with learning problems who are very low achieving in their academic attainments. Maybe I can learn the techniques on how to teach them more effectively."

e. Special education school (HI)

SET (HI),

"I volunteered to teach in this school because I have a son with HI. Hopefully by teaching in this school, I could help my son with his education. Without any experience in having someone disabled, RMCTs would not be interested in teaching children with disabilities."

"Maybe RMCTs who have been teaching mainstream children for many years might be interested in attending courses in special education, just to escape from the monotonous routine of mainstream teaching. But I think their numbers are very small. Only those who would like to widen their teaching skills to cover other types of children other than mainstream children."

9.4.3. Primary teachers' perceptions on the conditions for, and strategies to encourage RMCTs to accept IE

9.4.3.1. RMCT conditions for accepting IE

Directed by the State Education Department

SET (HI)

"I don't think RMCTs will accept children with HI into their classes voluntarily, but if directed by the State Education Department, they have no choice but to accept it."

RMCT (LD),

"If the Education Ministry likes it, we have to like it."

Headteacher (LD) had tried placement,

"There are RMCTs who will accept the inclusion of children with LD without directives, like those who were involved in our inclusion programme. All I did was to ask them to give this programme a chance, and they agreed to try it. The school only included children with LD into mainstream classes when the teachers agreed to it. If the teachers refuse, we don't force them."

RMCT from ordinary mainstream school said,

"In this school teachers accept a child with mental disabilities (assumed by the ordinary school concerned) because they are given the class with the children to teach. But I don't think teachers mind having him in the class in the first place."

Children with SEN have certain abilities

a. Have acquired pre-requisite skills

SET (VI),

"Prepare these children with Braille and orientation mobility first at phase I primary schooling so that children with VI are confident of their learning abilities."

RMCT (LD),

"At the very least children with LD must be able to manage themselves and become efficient in self-help skills."

b. Have no behavioural problems

RMCT (LD) had tried placement,

"If the children with LD do not have serious behavioural problems and have acquired skills in self-management, then they are very similar to other mainstream children with the exception of their ability to learn, which is much slower than that of mainstream children. This would make them acceptable to both mainstream children and RMCTs."

RMCT from ordinary mainstream schools,

"One child with mental disabilities (assumed by the ordinary school) has been in this school for the last four years. Teachers are willing to accept him into their class because he did not have behavioural problems. Thus teachers did not complain about having him."

c. Would not accept children with SEN even without behavioural problems

RMCT (LD) had experienced inclusion (mathematics),

"I would not accept this even if these children with LD don't have behavioural problems. I did try teaching these children in my class for the last two years (1995-1996). They do not have abnormal behaviours, but I just cannot teach them."

RMCT (LD),

"Even without behavioural problems it is difficult to accept these children with LD because academically they would not survive in my class. It would be a pity to leave them stranded like that, when they can have a more meaningful learning experience in SEC."

For non-academic subjects only

SET (LD),

"There are RMCTs who visit our class regularly who would accept our children with LD into their classes if these children can self-manage, especially classes involving non-academic subjects. These teachers don't need directives to teach children with LD."

SET (HI),

"Inclusion should initially involve non-academic subjects only, because children with HI have different intellectual maturity compared to mainstream children."

They also need different types of teaching and learning process for academically oriented subjects."

9.4.3.2. Strategies to encourage RMCTs to accept the placement of children with SEN Personal incentives

a. Monetary rewards

RMCT (LD),

"SETs are currently being paid RMS60 incentive allowance. Therefore RMCTs who are involved in the inclusion programme should also be given such allowance."

RMCT (VI),

"If don't care much about monetary rewards. If including these children makes my teaching difficult and troublesome, even if you give me an extra RMS60 per month I won't want it."

b. RMCT participation in IE programme made part of teachers' yearly appraisal

RMCT in ordinary mainstream schools,

c. RMCT sent for overseas trips, Headteacher from school with SEC (VI),

"RMCTs involved in inclusion programme should be sent for placement into foreign mainstream primary schools practising inclusion. This would enable RMCTs to learn and experience different teaching techniques and strategies used by their foreign counterparts in dealing with children with disabilities in the classrooms. They could then share and spread their knowledge and experiences to other teachers involved in the teaching of children with disabilities in the state."

d. Further studies in special education

SET (HI),

"At the moment there are several colleges of education and one local university offering diploma and degree courses in special education. RMCTs involved in the inclusion of children with disabilities should be sponsored by the Education Ministry to attend these courses."

Material resources

RMCT(LD),

"I want all teaching materials required to teach children with LD in my class to be made available for my use. I don't want to have to make my own teaching materials especially for these children. From what I can see in SEC these children need lots of different types of teaching materials to teach them the same concept."

Headteacher from school with SEC (VI)

“At the moment we don’t have enough Brailleurs for each of our children with VI. They have to share whatever Brailleurs that are available. We need to give each child a Brailleur if they are to be included in mainstream classes.”

Human support

a. Support from special education teachers

RMCT in ordinary mainstream schools,

“If this programme is implemented without retraining RMCTs, then assistants to SETs should be made available because we are inexperienced in dealing with these children’s educational needs. We need to ask someone how to start, what to do and what not to do”

b. Support from headteachers

RMCT(LD),

“RMCTs who have children with LD included in their classes should be given moral support by the headteacher. Don’t just put these children in the class and leave them to the discretion of the class teachers to fulfil their educational needs. The headteacher should discuss with RMCTs the problems they are having with the programme, and try to solve these problems.”

c. Support from other teachers

RET,

“The school’s teachers must be encouraged to work together in overcoming the educational problems of children with disabilities. There must not be any boundary between individual teachers’ responsibilities. RMCTs not involved in this programme must not feel that the education of children with disabilities in the school is not their responsibility. All teachers should shoulder the responsibilities of educating all children within the school irrespective of their educational needs. If this can be achieved, then inclusion would have a chance to succeed.”

Reduction of RMCT workloads

a. Reduce classroom population

RMCT (VI),

“Reduce the class population. Fewer children, fewer tables and chairs in the class. Thus more space for movement and more opportunity to give special attention to children with VI.”

b. Restrict IE to three children with SEN per mainstream class

SET(LD),

“RMCTs will accept these children with LD if one to three of them are included. Even in mainstream classes there are remedial education children whose academic ability is similar to these children’s.”

c. Include children with SEN in low achieving mainstream class

SET (LD),

“Our school practised streaming. Thus it would be more appropriate to include children with LD in the last class because the differences in academic abilities between the two sets of children would not be that great. This would make it easier for RMCTs to teach these classes.”

d. Reduce teaching periods and non-teaching responsibilities

Headteacher from ordinary mainstream school,

“I am not very keen on giving monetary rewards as incentive just because teachers need to give that extra attention to children with disabilities included in their classes. What needs to be done is to lessen teachers’ workloads because teachers I think would prefer to have fewer teaching burdens rather than monetary rewards.”

e. Only one type of SEN child per mainstream class

RMCT from ordinary mainstream school,

“There should be only one type of child with disabilities included in a mainstream class. If there are two or three different types of children with disabilities included, then the Education Ministry would see a mass resignation from teachers.”

Proof that IE work

RMCT (LD) had tried placement,

“The education authorities should prove to teachers that the programme can work and would benefit both mainstream children and children with LD educationally. When teachers have seen that it really does work, they would be more receptive toward the idea.”

Involve RMCTs recognised as excellent teachers

SET (HI),

“Initially RMCTs involved in this programme should be chosen from those recognised by the State Education Department as the state’s excellent teachers in their yearly teaching performance appraisal. As officially recognised excellent teachers, they will have all the teaching qualities that are needed to make an inclusion programme work.”

9.5. General issues

9.5.1. Barriers towards the implementation of IE into mainstream schools

Lack, of information

RMCT (LD) had tried placement,

“It is important for school communities to have a deep understanding of the educational needs of children with LD. When they are able to equate the importance of both the education of children with LD and mainstream children, only then will they accept the inclusion of children with LD into mainstream classes.”

Schools' system

a. Two sessions system

Headteacher in school with SEC for children with (LD) had tried placement,

"The school had tried including our children with LD before, but we had to discontinue this because we could not proceed to include them in primary 2 and 3. These classes begin their schooling in the afternoon, and our SEC is in the morning session."

b. Streaming, RMCT from ordinary mainstream school,

"The practice now is to stream children according to achievement. Those with the best results are streamed in class A and subsequently those with the poorest results in the lowest class. As it is, mainstream children are being segregated according to their examination performance. So what hope is there for children with disabilities?"

Teachers' workloads

a. High classroom population

RMCT (VI),

"There are differences in classroom environment between special education and mainstream classes. There are on average 45 children in a mainstream class and about 8 in SEC. Thus RMCTs cannot give these children with VI included in their classes the individual attention these children need. In SEC, SETs are able to give them the individual attention they crave for."

b. Responsibilities not related to teaching, RMCT (LD) had tried placement,

"Teachers are currently given too many responsibilities unrelated to classroom teaching which makes it difficult to fulfill the educational needs of mainstream children, never mind children with LD"

RMCT teaching skills

SET(LD),

"When teachers received their training at teacher training colleges, they were never told about the education of children with disabilities or their inclusion into mainstream classes, never mind training them to teach these children. They were only taught how to teach mainstream children."

Headteacher in ordinary mainstream school,

"Maybe teachers can teach children with LD but not children with HI and VI."

Examination pressure JPN officer,

"The demand by education authorities and communities for excellent UPSR achievements for mainstream children makes RMCTs unwilling to prioritise the educational needs of low achieving children."

Headteacher with SEC (LD) had tried placement,

“Ordinary mainstream school headteachers when they receive information from their class teachers that certain children in the school have educational problems, their immediate reaction is to send these children to our SEC. These headteachers seem reluctant to maintain these children in their own school. They are afraid that these children will affect their school’s overall percentage of UPSR passes.”

Acceptance of children with SEN

a. Headteachers’ negative perceptions

SET (HI) said,

“There are headteachers who leave the entire responsibility for the education of children with disabilities in their schools to a SEC co-ordinator. They just don’t want to know what happens in these classes. Sadly some of these headteachers had attended seminars on the education of children with disabilities.”

b. Unwillingness of RMCTs to accept children with SEN

SET (LD) had tried placement,

“What saddens me is that whenever RMCTs encounter children with learning problems in their class, instead of trying to overcome these children’s difficulties within the mainstream classroom context, they want to send them to our SEC. When we assess these children, we find that the majority of them only require remedial education, which RMCTs should undertake in their own class, not send them to SEC.”

RMCT (VI),

“Children with VI need to use a Braille to take notes, and its noise will disturb the other children in the class. Secondly, when they type in Braille, they cannot give their full attention to the lesson because they cannot hear our teaching.”

c. Negative acceptance by mainstream children

SET (HI),

“There was an occasion when children with HI and mainstream children fight with each other. Miscommunication between these two sets of children resulted in mainstream children having a negative perception of children with HI.”

d. Negative perceptions in mainstream children’s parents

RMCT (LD) had tried placement,

“When these children with LD were included in my class these past two years (1995-1996) some parents of mainstream children were uneasy about their presence. They didn’t like it when their children were in the same class as these children with LD.”

Headteacher in school with SEC (VI),

"Parents of mainstream children in this school don't mind if their children are in the same class with our children with VI. They always invited our children with VI to all the community activities in the past."

SET (VI)

"Maybe parents of children with VI do not want their children to be included in mainstream classes. There are three reasons for this. One, in mainstream classes there are too many children. In SEC there are only on average 6 per class. Education wise their children would get more individual attention in SEC."

Secondly, they might not be able to meet with the class teachers of mainstream classes as often as they are able to meet us from SEC. RMCTs have other children to worry about as well."

Thirdly, they worry some of these mainstream children would bully their children."

e. Professional interest

SET (HI),

"SET attitudes should change. These teachers are usually very protective of their teaching territories. For SETs teaching children with disabilities is their job. Both RMCTs and SETs should be able to accept encroachment into each other's teaching territories. There should not be any barriers in terms of responsibilities towards both mainstream children and children with disabilities. Everybody must play their part."

Resourcing

Headteacher of school with SEC (VI),

"We still have an insufficient number of Braille machines to accommodate all our children with VI. And we're still awaiting our supply from the Education Ministry."

RMCT in ordinary mainstream school,

"I don't think the school has the equipment and teaching material to teach children with VI. As for children with HI, I am not sure what equipment and teaching materials are relevant for them. For children with LD we don't have many commercialised teaching materials because we usually make our own."

SET (LD),

"There are no problems with teaching materials for children with LD because they can always borrow what are needed from our class."

SET (HI),

"You don't need any specialised materials or equipment to teach children with HI. All you need is ability to communicate using sign language."

b. Inadequate number of classrooms

SET (LD),

"We need more classes. At the moment even the music room and the library are used as classrooms. With the inclusion of children with LD, class population would need to be reduced, and the school doesn't have the extra classes to do this."

c. insufficient number of, or no SET in the school

SET (VI),

"We don't have enough SETs to assist RMCTs who have children with moderate VI included in their classes. All the school SETs are fully tied up in teaching our children in SEC. We can't even help those children who were included in mainstream classes with extra tuition to enable them understand the lessons taught in mainstream classes."

Besides the school has only two SETs who had undergone in-service training in the education of children with VI. The other six are either untrained temporary teachers or RMCTs who were asked to volunteer (some) to teach in SEC because of excess number of RMCTs in the schools."

Headteacher from ordinary mainstream school,

"The school doesn't have any SET for RMCTs to consult if inclusion is implemented."

Children with SEN

SET (LD) had tried placement,

"The candidates for our SEC are selected by the officer in charge of special education from the State Education Department. Not all the candidates chosen we felt would benefit educationally by being in our classes because some of them we felt are severely mentally handicapped. These children should be in community education classes organized by the Welfare Department of the national Unity and Social Development Ministry. As it is we ourselves are having problems with these children."

RMCT from ordinary mainstream school,

"It is difficult to control children with LD in mainstream classes because some of them I heard are hyperactive and like to disturb other children in the class. Even if one of them is included in mainstream class, teachers may not be able to control him/her because there are 40 other children in the class who also need their attention."

b. Children with SEN and low academic ability

RMCT (LD),

"Children with LD show slowness in grasping the subjects taught, which necessitates that teachers slow their normal teaching pace in order to accommodate them, and this is very worrying."

Negative acceptance of children with SEN to IE

RMCT (senior assistant 1) in school with SEC (LD),

"We had a boy with LD who SETs felt had the potentials to succeed in mainstream class. We tried to put him into primary 4 mainstream class, but he refused to go. His reason, he didn't like the class. He prefers to be in SEC and be taught by SET. My assumptions about his refusal were, one, in SEC he gets the full attention of SET, since in these classes there are only 6 children per class. In mainstream class there are 40 to 50 children per class. Two, he is comfortable with his friends in SEC, the SET, and SEC environment."

SET (VI),

"I once asked my children with VI would they like to study in mainstream classes. They all said no. Their reason is they are happy where they are."

9.5.2. Changes suggested by primary teachers prior to IE implementation in mainstream schools

Training in special education

a. Retraining of RMCT in special education

SET (LD) had tried placement,

"If IE is to be implemented in mainstream schools, the schools in association with the State Education Department should organize in-house training for RMCTs on how best to teach children with disabilities included in their classes."

The other alternatives is the establishment of special education training centres by the State Education Department in the various District Education Offices, in which RMCTs involved in inclusive education could be trained once a week or once fortnightly on how to teach a class with children with disabilities in it. This training should be continuous until RMCTs are confident in their ability to cope with children with disabilities included in mainstream classes. Setting up training centres at district level would also ensure that RMCTs can travel to and fro from their home."

b. Education of children with SEN and IE made part of teacher training syllabuses

Headteachers from school with SEC (LD) had tried placement,

"Educational needs of children with disabilities under the Education Ministry special education programme should be made part of teacher training college syllabuses so that teachers are well prepared mentally to accept children with disabilities in their class when given a post"

More information on IE to schools

Resourcing

a. Build more classrooms

SET (VI),

“Build more classrooms to reduce class population. Class size should be reduced to say 25 children per class, with one or two children with VI included in it.”

b. Create the post of teaching assistants

RMCT (senior assistant 1) from school with SEC (LD),

“If RMCTs are aided in their teaching by teachers' assistants, maybe they would agree to give the inclusion programme a try, but I still think it would be difficult for them to cope.”

Schools' system

a. One session schooling

Head teachers from school with SEC (LD) had tried placement,

“Schools' two sessions of schooling should be converted to just one session so that children with LD could be included in primary 2 and 3 in subsequent years.”

b. Extend individual subject period of teaching. RMCT (LD) had experienced placement,

“A subject period should be increased from the present 30 minutes to say 45 minutes so that appropriate attention can be given to children with SEN included in mainstream class.”

c. Establish or re-establish remedial education class

SET (LD) tried placement,

“Before we include children with LD in mainstream class, we should include them first in remedial education class for academic subjects of Bahasa Malaysia and mathematics. Once they have reached the required academic attainments in these two subjects then only we include them in mainstream classes.”

State Education Department

a. Appoint an officer in charge of special education at every District Education Offices
SET (LD),

“There should be always be one special education officer in every District Education Offices so that teachers don't have to go to the State Education Department every time they have problems. These officers should also be responsible for ensuring that inclusion implementation runs smoothly, and would be trouble shooters if there are hitches in its implementation.”

b. Continuous monitoring of I E programme once implemented

c. Officer in charge of special education at the State Education Department level should have special education background

SET (HI),

“At the State Education Department level, an officer in charge of state education affairs should have special education background. If not, they would not appreciate the problems of providing for the educational needs of children with disabilities.”

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